

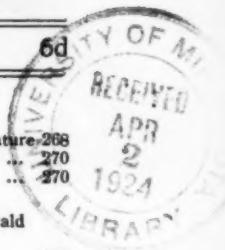
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Notes of the Week

THE entrance of Mr. Winston Churchill into the lists of the Westminster election has had some curious and rather disquieting results. We for our part would have been glad if Mr. Churchill had stood and been adopted as the Conservative candidate. Failing this, his insistence on standing as an Independent has split the Conservative electorate and produced two more candidates whose only effect can be still further to reduce the Conservative and Constitutional vote. If Mr. Churchill should by any chance be elected, he will go to the House of Commons as though with a mandate to form a new centre or "anti-Socialist" party—which would be nothing more than our old friend the Coalition of evil repute, with Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Birkenhead and Co. to manipulate the wires.

NEGATIVE POLICIES

We should regard this as a disaster; and we therefore find ourselves, in spite of our admiration for Mr. Churchill's personal gifts and qualities and our desire to see him safely penned into the Tory fold, hoping sincerely that he will not be elected for the Abbey Division. Plenty of other doors will open to restore him to the House of Commons; but the Abbey Division of Westminster should not be represented by a man who believes in State ownership of railways, or who thinks that experiments in State Socialism are interesting and healthy. Believing as we do in Conservative principles, we cannot regard anti-Socialism in itself as sufficiently representing these principles. We do not ourselves much believe in negative policies, and they certainly make very poor rallying points for militant public opinion. We should much prefer Mr. Winston Churchill as a pro-Conservative than as an anti-Socialist. As it is, the duty of Westminster Conservatives is to vote for Mr. Nicholson, the Conservative candidate.

THE CONSERVATIVE MACHINE

But the real lesson of this election is the muddle in tactics that has preceded it. Whatever be the truth as to the negotiations between Mr. Churchill and

Colonel Jackson (and, of course, we accept the statements of both), the whole thing shows signs of the fumbling, unsure, and sometimes disastrous touch on the Conservative machine that has been characteristic of it since Lord Younger and Sir Malcolm Fraser retired. We are quite frankly getting very sick of the kind of loyalty that causes public servants, however exalted, to make excuses for one another at the expense of the interests they profess to serve.

THE AIR ESTIMATES

The debate on the Air Estimates produced a somewhat more reassuring speech from the Under-Secretary for Air. Mr. Leach has evidently thought better, or been told to think better, of his gospel of unpreparedness. But there was still about his remarks an atmosphere of reluctance which is unusual, to say the least of it, in a minister defending the expenditure on his department. The increases may still be reconsidered, he said; but for our part we would welcome a reconsideration only with a view to their being further supplemented. Not twenty-six squadrons but thirty we consider an adequate minimum for home defence. On the subject of armaments the *Daily Herald* is an amusing study. While taking credit on its front page for what are in reality measures prepared by the late Conservative Government, it deplores in its leading article the necessity for defending the people of this country at all.

BEFORE AND AFTER

The attitude of the Government towards several matters which before its access to office it treated with less reserve, must be causing acute questionings in the minds of some of its supporters. It must be embarrassing to find oneself in office and called upon to give effect to promises made in the careless rapture of irresponsible opposition; and it is instructive to watch the systematic jettisoning of schemes on the strength of which many members of the Labour Party were elected to Parliament in December. The solicitous candidate was a splendidly violent creature, all long hair and red ties and wild promises; the elected representative is the mildest-mannered man, with plans that would not disturb a mothers' sewing party.

UNCLAIMED PLEDGES

The most disgraceful of these broken promises is that regarding Labour's Infallible Cure for Unemployment (sold—in sealed box not to be opened till after the election—to all enfranchised adults ready to swallow it, price one vote). When the box was opened it was found to resemble Mother Hubbard's cupboard, and all the fine promises of aspiring members amount to no more than a continuance of that policy which in others was so condemned. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's personal pledge on the subject of "ranker" officers' pensions is found to involve an expenditure of £13,000,000, and is to be scrapped. And as for the Rent Restriction Amendment Bill, on the proposed terms of which thousands of votes at the General Election were diverted to Socialism, both members of the Government who were on the committee considering this Bill have withdrawn, which probably means that the poor thing is dead as well as damned.

THE DUTY OF OPPOSITION

The Government has rounded several awkward corners during its short spell of office, but most of the opposition has come not from its foes but from its friends. Some of the severest critics of Mr. MacDonald's Administration are to be found on the Labour back benches, and after them the nearest approach to savagery has been shown by Labour's faithful hound, the Liberal Party. A kind of cheerful lethargy seems to have crept over the Conservative benches, and nothing like effective opposition has so far come from them. Here and there a member shows some sign of intelligent interest: Mr. MacNeill in particular, and Sir Samuel Hoare, whose championship of the affairs of his old department has been as admirable as it is necessary. Mr. Baldwin is sometimes bright and always serious, but seldom what one could call inspiring. The attitude of legs up and arms folded if persisted in may convey an unfortunate and quite erroneous impression of indifference.

SLEEPY SICKNESS

The Opposition wants more fire. Giving Labour "fair play" does not entail giving it a free hand. *Encephalitis lethargica*, which we notice is on the increase in this country, seems to have attacked some of the members of the Opposition. Liberals, having put Labour in office with magnanimous gestures, neglect no opportunity to remind their friends of the precariousness of their position. Beside them, Conservative criticism is mild—too mild and too diffuse. It is the old question of that lack of enthusiasm which fatally characterizes the body Conservative at the present time. Opposition is not a game, but a duty, and neglect of that duty, with a Socialist Party in office, will inevitably have consequences subversive to the political health of the nation which the nation will not forget.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' TIME

The proposal of the Government to appropriate for itself the time reserved for private members of the Conservative and Liberal Parties, and to leave inviolate that set apart for their own supporters had an engaging naïveté about it which appeals to the sense of humour. How they supposed they would obtain the necessary assent of the other parties to their suggestion is not explained; but they are now placed in the inevitable predicament of having to take their own private members' time as well or of getting hopelessly behindhand with Government business. This will involve, among other things, the indefinite postponement of the Coal Miners (Minimum Wage) Amendment Bill, and cause considerable resentment among the Socialist rank and file. The attempt to obviate this

necessity by suspending the eleven o'clock rule led the Government on Thursday to its first defeat. But this was no more than one of the many unavoidable inconveniences of office without power.

THE FRANC AND M. POINCARE

In the "Battle of the Franc," to use the current French phrase, France has won a victory. The considerable improvement in the value of her currency has, however, been obtained by means of credits from the Bank of England and from Messrs. Morgans, New York, and not from any real recovery in her general financial situation—which remains critical as before. Accompanying the financial crisis there has been and there is a political crisis involving the fate of M. Poincaré and his Government. Some strange emergency measures have even been discussed, such as the appointment of a dictator, and the postponement for a year of the elections, in the ordinary course only a few weeks away. But the probability is that this panicky feeling will pass, and that M. Poincaré will be able to come to terms with the Senate. Any sweeping change in the French Government would be most unfortunate on the eve of the presentation of the reports of the Expert Committees, for it would inevitably mean delay.

FRANCE AND SECURITY

It may have been observed that it is just when its economic failure seems likely to cause a profound modification of the French occupation of the Ruhr that French security is thrust into prominence. The obvious purpose is to present as strongly as possible the other great argument for the occupation; and this explains the publication at this juncture of the big Yellow Book, which deals with the security of France and nothing else. But no one in England denies that the question of French security is most tremendously important, and on a plane quite different from that of reparations. Indeed, the security of France is, as things are, an essential interest of Britain. The cancellation of the Anglo-American Pact gave France a genuine grievance; but it cannot be helped, except so far as Britain is concerned. Britain did offer an alliance, and it is significant that the French Press, notably the *Temps*, is discussing it afresh.

GERMAN DISARMAMENT

We gather from the reply Mr. MacDonald gave to a question put to him in the House of Commons that negotiations with France regarding reparations will be resumed as soon as the Experts' reports have been received. The Allied Note on Military Control (which was based on British suggestions) has not been well received in Germany, and this gives point to the question to what extent Germany has really been disarmed. If the disarmament has been as complete as has been stated, why should Germany object to show that this is so? There is basis for suspicion here, particularly as there has been no military control of Germany by the Inter-Allied Mission for the last fifteen months or so, and all observers testify that the desire for revenge is widespread among the German people. Further, the swing to the Right continues to be most noticeable throughout Germany.

THE NEW BELGIAN GOVERNMENT

After some ten days' negotiations M. Theunis has succeeded in forming a new Cabinet, owing to the co-operation of the Liberals and the Catholics, and the Belgian Parliament will reopen on Tuesday next. Most of the members of the Ministry are new men, but the most significant change is that M. Hymans has become Foreign Minister in place of M. Jaspar. One of the pressing things that will immediately engage the atten-

tion of the Belgian Government will be the financial situation, which is dominated, as in France, by the fall of the franc, as well as the increasing cost of living. With respect to reparations, M. Theunis definitely announced that he would work for a settlement of the whole question on the basis of the reports of the Expert Committees. It may be noted, by the way, that the question of security is of the last importance to Belgium, and though the French Yellow Book, naturally enough, did not consider her case, any discussion of the security of France must involve that of Belgium also.

M. VENIZELOS BREAKS DOWN

Hope had been general that M. Venizelos would succeed in his great effort to bring Greece back to unity and settled conditions, but the melancholy truth is that he has utterly failed, and in despair has again left Athens for France. Faction has been too much for him. It was at the request of the military leaders as well as the Venizelists that he returned to his country to make the attempt, and his declared policy was to leave to the nation, by plebiscite, its decision for a monarchy or a republic. For a time things seemed to go well, and then his health broke down. He resigned the Premiership, and was succeeded by M. Kaphandaris, who has been overthrown by the same military leaders who had sent the invitation to Venizelos, and who now demand the immediate abolition of the monarchy, though they had accepted his programme. It is a miserable story, and can give satisfaction to none except the enemies of Greece; and they are at her gates.

GOVERNMENTS AND THE LEAGUE

Special interest attaches to the meeting of the Council of the League of Nations held this week at Geneva. Lord Parmoor made his first appearance as the representative of Britain, her previous representatives being Lord Balfour and Lord Cecil. In a speech Lord Parmoor declared that the policy of this country would always be based upon the League of Nations, and that as long as the Labour Government remained in office it would do its utmost to develop the scope of the League. As our readers know, we have our own views on the League, but we may point out that the Baldwin Government was just as emphatic in its support of the League as is the MacDonald Government, and that the fact that the latter is a Labour Government does not of itself add in any way to the strength of the League, though Lord Parmoor appears to suggest that it does. There has always been plenty of idealism about the League. What it lacks is real power.

THE POSITION IN INDIA

The enemies of British rule in India have been extremely unhappy since the Finance Member placed them on the horns of the dilemma we described last week. The Swarajists, to be sure, have managed to defeat the Government by 63 votes to 56 on the Customs Estimates, but they are not all agreed as to future policy, and the Independents, who have earned that proud title by always taking the line of least resistance and apologizing for their action afterwards, are positively miserable. We fear, however, that the advantage secured by the Government is only temporary. The aim of the few Indian politicians who count seriously is to force the Government into carrying on by frequent use of what were intended to be exceptional measures, and then to invite mass resistance. In no quarter in India is there promise of the rise to power of a group of politicians resolved to work the new Constitution, and delays in the success of the extremists are hardly of much value in the absence of moderates capable of taking their place as leaders of Indian opinion.

TURKS, ARABS AND THE CALIPHATE

The revolutionary regime in Turkey has most probably considerably lowered the prestige which its successful bluff has hitherto secured for it among the Islamic peoples, by its arbitrary action in deposing the ex-Sultan from the position of Caliph of Islam. It may seem a little surprising that the Turks should lightly throw away the possession of a dignity which they have for centuries held in the face of continued protests—or, at best, with only the involuntary acquiescence of all the Mohammedan peoples not directly subject to their sway—and to which under the sacred law of Islam they possess no shadow of right. The office of "Khalifa," as the spiritual head of Islam is entitled, was instituted by the Prophet himself, and among the very stringent qualifications which he laid down for its holder was the provision that the person elected to the dignity must be a member of the Koreish tribe of Arabs—to which people Mohammed himself belonged. The racial limitation was strictly observed until the Turkish Sultan Selim, in the sixteenth century, succeeded in securing for himself and his successors an office to which they have never had a real claim and to which their title has never been more than grudgingly admitted.

JEALOUSIES

We may wonder whether the mutual jealousies of the Arab tribes, which have so constantly prevented them from grasping occasions that have offered for increasing their prestige, will at this juncture be sufficiently controlled to admit of their taking joint action to secure the Caliphate for King Hussein of the Hedjaz, who has been nominated for the honour. The King at least possesses the chief qualification demanded of the holder of the headship of the Moslem world, for he is, of course, a member of the tribe prescribed by the Prophet, being in fact a lineal descendant of Mohammed himself.

THE STRIKE ATMOSPHERE

We live, and so long as the present Government lasts shall continue to live, in an atmosphere of strikes. Almost every class of worker feels that, whatever the specific declarations of the Government, this is the time to press claims for better conditions or larger wages. At the moment of writing, coal miners and owners are discussing, not very hopefully, the question whether the wage, which is roughly 20 per cent. above that of June, 1914, should be raised to 30 or to 40 per cent. above the 1914 figure. The ratio of standard profits to standard wages is at present as 17 to 100; the workers demand that it be reduced to 13. It is eminently characteristic of the times through which we are passing that, while the negotiations are going on, the South Wales and Lancashire miners should have increased their demands well beyond those originally submitted by the Miners' Federation. Increase of demand by the workers is in the air.

THE FRENCH RAILWAY ACCIDENT

The accident to the Calais-Ventimiglia express exposes some unsatisfactory facts in regard to French railway systems. It is clear from the engine-driver's account of the smash that the facing-points on French tracks are clumsily laid, and that the route instructions given to the driver at Dijon were wrong. The failure to provide an efficient fireman on an important run like that of the "Rapide" is equally disturbing. There is a fatal carelessness and haphazardry about French transport methods, both by land and air, which persists in the face of repeated disaster, and increases quite unnecessarily the risks attending the holiday-maker on the Continent. There is evidently something in the Gallic temperament that despises the hum-drum routine of mere efficiency.

THE BULLDOG'S BLEAT

TO a popular preacher, craving for a reputation as a coiner of epigrams, there is doubtless a great temptation to say that wars are made in Lombard Street. Similarly, it is incumbent on politicians who have flirted with sedition in a time of national peril to claim the conviction that Park Lane is inimical to peace and that but for capitalism Europe would be indistinguishable from Arcady. The trouble comes when parson and politician find themselves confronted with the realization that the causes of war to-day are the same as they were in an age when Lombard Street was virgin forest and the capitalist dwelt in a cave. With the problems of the ambitious epigrammatist we are not concerned, but in view of the fact that the politicians in question are, under the King, the present rulers of this country, the mental gymnastics in which they are compelled to indulge are not entirely lacking in interest.

Fortunately our curiosity is easily satisfied by reference to the official organ of the Labour Party. It appears, though the admission is surprising from a journal which seems to consider that the lightning strike gives proof of the strikers' selfless citizenship, that "Ministers are compelled in this matter (i.e., the provision, totally inadequate, for the defence of the Empire) to do what the mass of the nation wishes. No holder of office can act according to his own personal opinions and feelings if they clash with what the mass of the nation thinks and feels." (This is gratifying. It is not merely a majority but "the mass of the nation" which questions whether the prestige of this country can safely be entrusted to men who, when civilization trembled in the balance, deemed the broad arrow more honourable than the regimental badge.) But our casuists are, seemingly, swayed by other considerations. Indulgence to the full of pacifist ideals "would cause the Labour Government to be instantly replaced by one certain to increase armaments to a far greater extent." This is extremely probable. The electorate, for some unaccountable reason, is apt to insist that those whom it pays to govern shall provide for its defence. Therefore, in order that comfortable salaries and official residences may be retained, it is necessary to risk the indignation of seditious supporters and to adopt, grudgingly and apologetically, the far-too-modest estimates of capitalist, war-loving predecessors. But it must not be thought that this is an admission of defeat. Only for a time will this dissembling be necessary. "We must win over the bulk of the nation." When this has been achieved there will, presumably, be nothing to prevent the complete disbandment of the armed forces of the Crown.

It would seem, at first sight, that our entertaining contemporary has underestimated the magnitude of its task. One would think that before the bulk of the nation can be persuaded to accept disarmament, it is necessary that such ardent pacifists as M. Poincaré and Signor Mussolini shall give some evidence of Arcadian yearnings. But one would be wrong. We gather that it is the spectacle of a defenceless Britain which is to convince our neighbours of the error of their ways. Even as Sir Jaspar Murgatroyd, seeking the young life which stands between him and the inheritance, feels his hand palsied at the sight of unprotected innocence, so, we are assured, will the nations of the world be purged of their baser passions by the contemplation of our weed-grown dockyards and our abandoned aerodromes. Alas! We must confess to scepticism. While prepared to admit that the Lyceum Theatre fulfils a certain need we consider that as a school of foreign policy it leaves much to be desired. Moreover the whole tone of the pacifist speeches and writings smacks so unpleasantly of that hypocrite and coward, the immortal Heep. "How can you make yourself so inferior to me as to show such a bad spirit? To think of your going and attacking *me* that have always been a friend to you! But there can't be a

quarrel without two parties, and I won't be one. I will be a friend to you in spite of you. So now you know what you've got to expect." It is unlikely that these words will have any more effect on the flushed invader than they had on David Copperfield; and we thank God that not one Englishman in a thousand really wishes that such a tone shall be adopted by the country which, in little more than a hundred years, has, by its superhuman efforts, twice saved Europe from the domination of a tyrant.

We make no apology for harping on this theme. On the contrary we consider it our duty to keep the subject before the public. There are too many signs of a growing and infinitely dangerous complacency. We are expected to be grateful that the modest air estimates of the Conservatives have been adopted with regret and to applaud because five cruisers are to be built "for the relief of unemployment." Speaking for ourselves we may say that gratitude for the meagre gift is marred by the manner of the giving. Instruments of war should not be fashioned to an accompaniment of protests and excuses. When the bulldog bleats the cur takes courage. If we would persuade practical, unregenerate and traditionally hostile neighbours of the futility of piling up armaments, if we would convince the Dominions that it is in their interests to draw tighter the bonds which unite them to us, we must make it clear that we are determined, no matter at what sacrifice, to maintain armed forces proportionate both to our European and to our Imperial needs. It may be that Labour Ministers feel that the postponement of the millennium demands some explanation, but it may also be that in saving their faces they are running the risk of losing our Empire.

A Pilgrim's Progress

London, March 13

THE most effective things can be accomplished in the mildest way. The granting of permission for taxi-cabs to drive (and therefore ply for hire) in the Royal Parks marks nothing short of a revolution in what may be called the wheeled social life of London. The fact that the circle round Hyde Park is no longer used as a parade, but merely as a thoroughfare for private motor-cars and carriages, is not the cause of this locomotory revolution. The reason is, of course, our highly democratic Labour Government, which is all for attacking privilege and removing barriers. The facts that privilege may sometimes be in itself a good thing, that when we attack a privilege it is seldom with the view of abolishing it, but only of transferring it, and that barriers may make for order and the regulation of traffic—these are not arguments that would be of any value at this moment in attempting to dissuade the Government from making a change of this kind. Hardly a protest has been raised in the Press; and therefore you might suppose that the change was of no importance, and that it did not matter in the least whether or not the drives of Hyde Park were invaded now by motor-vehicles with a licensing plate instead of bearing only a registered number.

* * *

But it does matter very much. This is one of those cheap concessions alleged to be in the interests of the majority, but really in the interest of quite a small and not particularly grievance-laden minority. I cannot imagine who or what body can have been at the back of any agitation for this change; it is rather in the nature of a sop thrown out at large in order that when the day of reckoning comes it may be accounted among the boons granted to the once down-trodden proletariat. God knows that our streets are made sufficiently horrible nowadays by the noise and throng of motors and omnibuses; it is inevitable and must be put up with. But there was always a certain peace in the parks for

poor men and women who were without the means to ride either in private motor cars or taxi-cabs, and who could there get away from the wheeling commotion that to such people must often seem like the embodiment of insanity. We know that the Royal Parks were used by people like this, and that the richest and the poorest were both at home there, the aristocrat in his carriage no less than the poor dead-beat failure lying asleep on the friendly grass. And it is only to the wearied and unhappy seeking rest there, or the pedestrian who uses the park for the simple pleasure of enjoying open air quiet and beauty, that the coming of the taxi-cab will make any difference. The difference that it will make to them is that it will do something to destroy what is the supreme value of these green enclosures, their isolation from the commercial traffic of the streets.

* * *

The people who will benefit are the taxi-drivers and the people who drive in taxi-cabs—a large company of course. But taxi-cab drivers are a very small minority of the general public, and have no claim as against the greater claim of those who use the parks for the purpose for which they are provided. It must be said, of course, that the general public uses taxi-cabs; but at the present rates it is only the better-off among the general public. The poor person cannot afford to ride in taxi-cabs. The old saying is being fulfilled: "To him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." To the person who can afford to ride in a taxi-cab is to be given the additional pleasure of riding in a private road between flowers and trees; from the person who must go on foot, and whose outdoor pleasures are restricted to walks in public places, is to be taken away the rare, but on that account all the more precious, privilege that he had—of enjoying the flowers and trees and grass in comparative peace and silence and dustlessness. And it is a Socialist Government that is doing this! The person who can afford to ride in the taxi-cab is a privileged person; the weary toiler to whom the park is a refuge and an escape has few privileges indeed; and among them stands high this privilege provided by the Royal bounty. But the quietness and solitude, which the Sovereigns of England have freely placed at the disposal of the humblest subject, the Labour Government has chosen to take away.

* * *

I venture to point out this anomaly because it has been accepted almost without question as a "concession" on the part of the inexhaustible benevolence of Socialism; instead of being, as it is, a deprivation, a restriction and a curtailment of the privileges of the people. Liberty is not merely freedom from chains or confinement; it means freedom to live, freedom to be quiet, freedom to be alone, freedom not to be subject to all the abominable noises and commotions that are called prosperity. It does not appear as though our Socialist Government had very much respect for that kind of freedom. The kind of freedom that they offer us is well represented by the honk of the taxi-cab in Hyde Park, and (incidental to it) a complete ignoring on the part of the enfranchised drivers of the decorous speed limit which has been on the whole faithfully observed by private motorists. I, in the position of privileged plutocrat, was whirled through Hyde Park the other night at twenty-five miles an hour at the very least; and although many other taxi-cabs preceded me, the only cars which my vehicle overtook were private cars. I felt that I and my driver were creating a nuisance; but when at the end of the drive I suggested to him that he had been exceeding the park limit, he merely remarked, "Oh, all them limits is off now." When a child or two has been run over

in the park, "them limits" will be momentarily applied again; but the rush and roar of the juggernaut that is crushing down liberty and the privilege of the individual to be himself—these will not be sensibly abated. We must expect it for the moment to be regarded as evidence of progress that the things which limit the power of the majority to be offensive to the individual will be pushed aside, or, with a gesture of sham munificence, abolished; and that "all them limits is off now."

FILSON YOUNG

THE DANCING CHAMPIONSHIPS

BY GEOFFREY DEARMER

On the night of March 4 Mr. Maxwell Stuart and Miss Miles won the world's dancing championship; Mr. Reuben and Mrs. Jackson became amateur champions, and Mr. G. K. Anderson and Miss Bradley winners of the "mixed" championship. The reader will almost certainly be unacquainted with these names, for ball-room dancing, unlike every game from billiards to badminton, is not usually regarded as a competitive art. Impeccable horsemen will slouch round a ball-room, sergeant-major-like subalterns on the barrack square will droop and wobble at the knees on the floor, and those whose knowledge of champions is otherwise complete will stare at the above six names without reverence or recognition.

Literary critics used to write of "high seriousness" in poetry: to-day games critics should write of high seriousness in games. Seriousness in games is closing in on us. Seriousness has produced the undaunted, weather-beaten Wimbledon face, the set jaw, the cleaving chin, the windmill right arm. Seriousness has produced the Mah-Jongg League and the Ping-Pong Association. Only dancing as an art remains unrecognized; yet a recent issue of *The Times Literary Supplement* reviewed at a blow eight books on Mah-Jongg—and dropped a "g" in the title. Not that the championships at Queen's Hall lacked devotees. The four dances—foxtrot, tango, walse and one step, and three groups, Amateur, Mixed and Professional, formed twelve events. Only twenty couples were admitted into each of these events, and preliminary heats were held at London, Manchester, Brighton and elsewhere for two months in order to weed out the less expert of the experts. Then on the evening of March 3 and the afternoon of March 4 came the "competitions proper"; the twelve judges sought for that higher grace and dignity, and that peculiar restraint necessary in modern dancing combined with smooth suppleness; and found it only among a few. A very select band played very select music, and the organizers published beforehand the tunes chosen. By Tuesday afternoon the finals had been reached, and enthusiasts foregathered at the large Queen's Hall to watch.

Each couple competed for a maximum of one hundred marks, equally divided into five headings—Style, Rhythm, Deportment, Technique and Expression, and the judges, one supposes, mentally subtracted marks from this maximum. The judges certainly stood in the centre of the hall watching and conferring while the flower of the dancing army glided round them. Modern dancing is a glide. The feet are flat, the knees stiff, the movement entirely from the hips; the feet are not brought together except in the waltz, and the turns, which are quiet and pivotal, need poise and momentum. By 3.30 on Tuesday the twenty couples in each event had been reduced to six; decision became increasingly difficult, but the male competitors, numbered like race-horses or athletes, seemed to move almost involuntarily with the music, and their partners responded intuitively, many with half-closed eyes. Response is half the dance, and no girl can dance much better than her partner, who controls the level of merit, raising or debasing that level according to his ability.

Mr. Somerset Maugham's dancing master in the last act of 'Our Betters' is the antithesis of fact. His appearance, his accent, even his deportment, are all wrong. The modern dancing master *dances*, and is known as a professional. He is a tall, slight, athletic and youthful figure. Youth is more or less essential to the modern style, which is athletic and, in the one-step especially, very swift. The modern expert, given the range impossible to a crowded ball-room, covers a considerable amount of ground with a dash and vigour delightful to watch, and far more exacting than the requirements of a year or two ago. Languid and spasmodic jerks, the slovenly *chassé* and the free and easy go-as-you-please style have given place to the restrictions of an almost classical restraint. This new manner is now universal at such places where good dancers congregate. These resorts are less the fashionable clubs and restaurants as rooms devoted to the art, like Queen's Hall, The Empress Rooms and that admirably organized institution the *Palais de Danse*.

Mr. Sylvester and Miss Clarke, last year's champions, and the runners-up of this year, were obvious favourites. They won the professional one-step, and their extreme attractiveness and popularity must have worried the judges. For it is precisely this romantic weakness in human nature—this preference for the better looking, the more potentially graceful, the more striking in dress and expression—that goes for popularity, and which can never altogether be eliminated from the most impartial of opinions. The public's unblushing candour in preferring prettiness and the feminine or masculine appeal has crowded out many fine actors and actresses. This instinctive clamour for "charm" to medicine the sweet sleep of the stalled and undiscerning which drove Duse to refuse to make up, and for long refused extensive recognition to such artists as Clare Greet and Haidee Wright, is the greatest danger in the judging of dancing. The twelve judges at Queen's Hall were obviously aware of it; on the other hand they never fell into the inverted intellectual snobbery of preferring a couple because they were less pretty, less becomingly dressed, less naturally endowed with the advantages of height or fashion—in a word, less attractive.

We hear much about the ugliness of modern dancing from those who prefer good mannerisms to good manners, and from those who cannot discuss decency without indecency. One cannot believe that these ancients ever danced themselves with any distinction even when they "hopped in standard style" in the polka. To-day, as Mr. Hardy wrote in his 'Reminiscences of a Dancing Man':

Who now remembers gay Cremorne
And all its jaunty jills,
And those wild whirling figures born
Of Jullien's grand quadrilles?
With hats on head and morning coats
There footed to his prancing notes
Our partner-girls and we;
And the gas-jets winked, and the lustres clinked,
And the platform throbbed as with arms enlinked
We moved to the minstrelsy.

The foxtrot, the one-step, even the waltz, will probably seem "archaic" to our great-grandchildren, for dancing must change to live. Progress need not imply improvement, but it must imply change, and the dancing man who does not vary his movements from year to year loses interest in the exercise, and consequently becomes stale. Dancing undoubtedly will change, but it is difficult to imagine how it will change for the better, so admirably adapted is it to the requirements of a crowded ball-room and the requirements of those hostesses who regard it merely as a social obligation. Dancing, to be practised at all by other than experts, cannot be given much latitude in Expression—its fifth requirement. "Expressional" dancing means acrobatic and sensational dancing on an empty stage. "To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind" requires a shore, and one cannot echo Florizel's aspiration to our Perditas of the ball-room:

when you do dance, I wish you
A wave o' the sea, that you might ever do
Nothing but that; . . .

Our fox-trot champions will never be waves o' the sea. Waves are standardized, and the "Blues," like Mah-Jongg, were not standardized, at all events before the Championship Ball. We imported the rhythms of Central America and made them British. They are now refined, quiet, almost phlegmatic in expression. Dancing is as much a form of national expression as cricket, but it is by nature not a game nor a form of competition, as the judges at Queen's Hall proved in their efforts to make it one, if only for a moment.

MR. GALSWORTHY GOES ON TOUR

By IVOR BROWN

The Forest. By John Galsworthy. St. Martin's Theatre.

HERE is much to be said for the artist who has the courage to change his spots. It will always be complained against him that he isn't what he was, that he has lost touch, that he should remember the days of his youth. There will be heavy financial pressure to keep him in the old, familiar track whose metal has proved golden. Publishers and theatrical managers are great believers in the art and craft of self-repetition. In the purely mechanical forms of entertainment, such as the production of popular novels or comedies with an eight-hour day and all Trade Union conditions observed, the men of business are probably right. Well might some Polonius of Wardour Street bid the dramatist of a single success to his old self be true. Suppose that Miss Simplicity Stark has launched a thousand editions of 'Heart of Flame'; then would she be wise immediately to cap it with 'A Soul on Fire,' and to persist henceforward in laying upon that public altar of the great god Tosh, the railway bookstall, similar and punctual burned offerings, savoury with the steam of passion pie.

But an artist should not be so bound. Mr. Galsworthy is a remarkable dramatist because he put forth some very good wine first. His early essays in compassionate realism did indeed bring something fresh into the jaded air of the Edwardian play-house. But that is no reason why he should be caged for ever in the confines of his 'Silver Box'; nor because he wrote finely of a convict's cell, should shades of the prison-house begin to close for ever on the growing playwright. I cannot understand the criticism that forbids Mr. Galsworthy, because he once made himself the perfect magistrate of our stage, to take off his black coat and buy a ticket to the tropics. The forest of his new play is the tangled morass of Central Africa, and his resolution in crossing the Mediterranean by fancy's flight is something to his credit and dissipates the common complaint that these realists are dull, unadventurous dogs.

Moreover in this play Mr. Galsworthy has defied the wisdom of Horace and changed his mood as well as his sky in slitting over-seas. He has done more than strip off the magistrate's broad-cloth; he has rolled up his sleeves for battle. Finished is the careful balancing of pros and cons with which he used to construct his neat dramatic equations; impartiality has been cast aside. Judicial reticence vanishes. Mr. Galsworthy has gone on tour and taken a bludgeon for his luggage. I could only wish he had chosen a less obvious skull to crack.

A smaller dramatist could have battered the ugly soul out of Adrian Bastaple, who spins a web over Africa from his office in the City of London. He is the kind of man who would sink a thousand lives to float a single company. The play is set back into the later 'nineties and we are introduced to Mr. Bastaple as he is playing spider to some of the more eminent and simple flies of the Liberal party. Philanthropy is easily enmeshed in the Bastaple parlour and the expedi-

tion that is going, ostensibly and with Liberal support, to round up slave-raiders, has for its real purpose the frying of Mr. Bastaple's financial fish.

The point of the play is that the frying party are quite ignorant of their culinary purpose; they fall into the fire and are slowly, hideously burned away. Yet in the end the Bastaple fish are safe enough and that astute, guttural, and rather obviously melodramatic financier is left thinking of a second helping. I prefer to keep my description of his procedure to this kitchen-metaphor for the simple reason that I found his actual methods of operation not merely fishy, but as complex as the skeleton of a herring. I would not care to write from memory a history of the flotation called South African Concessions, but I am prepared to take Mr. Galsworthy's word for it that the game was all quite feasible and that "selling the dummy" is as common and effective a trick in the City as it is on the Rugby football ground. In any case the moral of it all is crystal-clear, even though we suspect the finance to be a trifle frenzied. When it is a matter of developing new spheres of influence, be an organizer at home and not a path-finder abroad. Item, note that the species Bastaple is a curse to the world. Item, note that so long as the curse endures decent men will be wheedled into dying that knaves may grow fat.

It may be urged that Mr. Galsworthy has devoted four acts to proving self-evident propositions. There to my mind is the weakness of his play. Bastaple is too easy a target for so skilled a gunner against iniquity. There is a certain amusement in watching his parlour-tricks with the Liberal flies, but on the whole he is too gross a scamp to be dramatically attractive. Mr. Franklyn Dyall gave the part a somewhat lurid portraiture that turned any possible refinements of shadiness into pitchy black. There is amusement too in watching Bastaple's confidential clerk, played with the very glove-fit of deferential knowingness by Mr. J. H. Roberts. Yet the Bastaple parlour, taken in the round, is a little too bad to be true.

The first and fourth acts, which take place in Bastaple's office, are prologue and epilogue to the struggle in the forest or rather to the struggle against the forest. For the forest, trackless, fever-haunted, and ambushed about with native foes, becomes almost a living personage against which Bastaple's dupes and drudges must fight as hard as against any of the local cannibal kings. The party too is divided against itself; its first officer is a sinister ruffian with a private fish-supper of his own in view. So here again is the conflict of decency with knavery interlaced with the conflict of human against natural forces. The forest scenes are as tempestuously eventful as any film-fed lover of battle, murder, and sudden death could desire. Poisoned arrows are winged across the stage, tom-toms beat and knives flash, fevers rage and stores give out. "Africa ever brings evil," observed the sagacious Aristotle. Mr. Galsworthy is here a full-blooded Aristotelian; also an engaging melodramatist, very far removed from his earlier self which led the intellect of Manchester in reverential solemnity to the austerities of the Gaiety Theatre. And yet why not? Melodrama, say what gravity will, is in fashion. All the chosen of the chosen few appear to be treading that fiery path. First Mr. Archer; then Miss Dane; now Mr. Galsworthy. These are stirring times.

Mr. Dean, as the framer of this fearsome glimpse, has started with an apparent handicap. How to cram a Continent on the garden-plot of the tiny St. Martin's stage? How to make a forest out of two trees and a tom-tom? How to make a bow-and-arrow battle in the space of a boxing-ring? With the aid of Mr. George Harris, his scenic designer, he has come through with triumph. The forest does loom out from a simple cloth or two; perhaps it looms the more convincingly because there is not room for crowds of trees or men or live-stock. The public which strains at a Nat Gould and swallows a Chu Chin Chow camel may think

this simplicity disappointing; but I was glad to be spared the atmospheric chunks that usually litter up the stage when the producer tries his hand on African waste or Asian mart. How refreshing to avoid the beggars and the drovers and the sandstorm in the desert! Treat every manager according to his deserts and who should 'scape whipping? Thank heavens here are no deserts; only a forest and that, in canvas area, a very little one. Impossible to protest that you cannot see the blood for the trees.

Mr. Dean, too, has shown once more what an eye he has for casting his parts. Mr. Galsworthy, being artist as well as melodramatist, has given him some differentiation of character on which to work; the exploring party is made up of genuine individuals, though the actual conversation of men in such a plight would probably have been more monotonous and less printable. One remembers a good Scottish type supplied by Mr. Campbell Gullan, a kindly physician suggested by Mr. H. R. Hignett, and a dark horse admirably ridden by Mr. Leslie Banks. Miss Hermione Baddeley took the first-night house by storm with her impersonation of a half-caste native girl who could both look daggers and use them. This young actress has at her command an intensity that is perfectly suited to the simulation of the macabre. Mr. Galsworthy had given her a great chance and she took it.

OUR SPIRITUALISTS

BY HELEN HAMILTON

"**F**UNNY goings-on, they *see-ances*. But you never know wot the gentry won't take into their 'eads to do next, the ladies on 'em in partickler. Let them wot's dead an' gorn bide quiet in their graves! Time enough w'en the Day comes. An' come w'en it will, it'll come too soon for some as 'as to answer for wot they done. But you can only do your best accordin' to your lights an' try to live decent."

Having thus unburdened ourselves, we fall, for a space, into a rather uneasy silence; look a little thoughtful. Then, all ears, we listen to fresh stories about these spiritualistic *seances* that come to us in devious ways. But we have one authoritative source of information, since a well-known London medium spends a fortnight every year in our village. She wanders about the hills, with, as we think, a mad, abstracted air, her clothes hanging anyhow on to her tall, gaunt frame, and very wispy about the hair. She says the Downs speak to her, that they are full of spirits which she finds infinitely refreshing. A local wag said he found them very refreshing too, and how much a bottle were they up there? She did not appear to grasp the drift of his question and replied they were not in a bottle, but floating about in the air. "Then they bain't no good to me, ma'am," he replied. "Ah, but if you only knew what a help they are, these spirit-guides," she exclaimed in rhapsody, and waved a vague hand in the direction of the hills. Sometimes she comes into our cottages, creeping stealthily like a cat after milk, and nosing about, likely as not declares positively that she detects the presence of "ghostesses." We laugh it off, though it makes us feel a little creepy after dark. "But there bain't no room for ghostesses, not in our cottages, there bain't," we assert defiantly in our more quaking moments. "Ardly room for us as it is." She has offered more than once to hold *seances* for our special benefit, but we always decline very firmly. "Doan't want nothink o' that sort," we remark uneasily. "Might see an' ear somethink you didn't reckon for." But she is hailed with awe and rapture by the local spiritualists, and they do table-turning and *planchette* and such-like things every evening of her stay.

There is Miss Cox, who turns these occult gatherings to profitable account. She is a great one for betting

on horses and she gets reliable tips in this way, she declares. For instance, "Gumboot" was spelt out once as the winner of a certain race, and "Blue-stocking" came in first. To her abiding anger and regret, she had not the gumption to perceive the obvious connexion at the time, and put her money on another horse.

And then there is Miss Blake. She is naturally of a rather sceptical disposition and faith did not come easily to her, but when at one *séance* she was told to go to London when she would hear of something to her advantage, and having gone, not without reluctance, found her flat had been broken into and her choicest possessions stolen, she could hold out no longer. Such evidence was too convincing. Now she does nothing, however trivial, without the guidance of *planche* or automatic writing. Once, when she was in doubt as to what she should give some rather special visitors for lunch, she got the answer, "Rats." That but made assurance doubly sure. The control that day must have been real to have had such a real sense of humour. Spiritualism, she is now happily convinced, is the one sure guide for perplexed people in troubled times.

Mrs. Jervis has married twice, and both husbands have passed on before her. Have they met? Do they know about—her? If so, do they cut each other, or do they quarrel over their competing claims? And when her time comes to join them, what will their reception of her be? What should hers be of them? What is the etiquette in such a delicate matter? Would she have to decide in favour of one or the other? If so, which? Or should she tactfully make no reference to the past, take it for granted that bygones are by-gones, and make a fresh start? These, and a host of similar questions, are constantly laid before *planche*, but without so far eliciting any very clear or conclusive answers. In fact, it seems rather coyly elusive about them, and so has confined itself to describing squiggles all over the paper, which baffle even the interpretative power of the London medium. But Mrs. Jarvis continues to hope that some day such response will be forthcoming as will clear up all her doubts. Mrs. Streeter is also concerned about two departed spouses, but for quite another reason. They drank heavily and she wishes to know whether they still do. If so, she means to have nothing more to do with them. Speaking for ourselves, we are not surprised they sought consolation in spirituous liquor. "Livin' with a ooman like 'er, a-nag-naggin' orl day! No wonder they took to drink! Nuff to make any man. An' 'er second, wot was never the worse for it. afore she took an' married 'im." Thus we remark in extenuation.

Miss Fulton suffers from chronic ill-luck. Nothing she ever does prospers. She needs money and needs it badly, but her schemes invariably end disastrously. She tried dog-breeding, but pups were hardly born before they were dead of distemper. Then she started poultry, but the chickens promptly got the pip and died too. Then she bethought herself of rose-growing and spent a lot of money buying expensive trees. No sooner had she planted them than, blighted, they withered away. Nothing daunted, she invested in a cherry-orchard. A late frost killed the bloom and trees were blasted and blackened as if they all had been struck by lightning. Spiritualism, she feels, is her only hope. The advice given, so far as she can make out, is to open a ladies' hat-shop in the village, but she is not quite sure if she got it right. And since it is rather difficult to perceive where the customers

will come from, for our purchases in the hat line are few and far between, she is going to wait and see whether the message becomes more clear and definite before making her plunge. But the resourcefulness of spirits, when you lay your difficulties before them, is perfectly wonderful, she declares. We certainly ought, according to her, to bring them into our daily lives and take counsel of them.

Only one gentleman attends the *séances*. He wants to know the date of the Last Day. For years he has been unable to live within his income, and his credit in the neighbourhood, though his net has been widely flung, is nearly exhausted. If the end of the world is to come shortly, that would get him out of his difficulties.

Correspondence

ENRICO CORRADINI

(FROM OUR ITALIAN CORRESPONDENT)

Rome, March 10, 1924

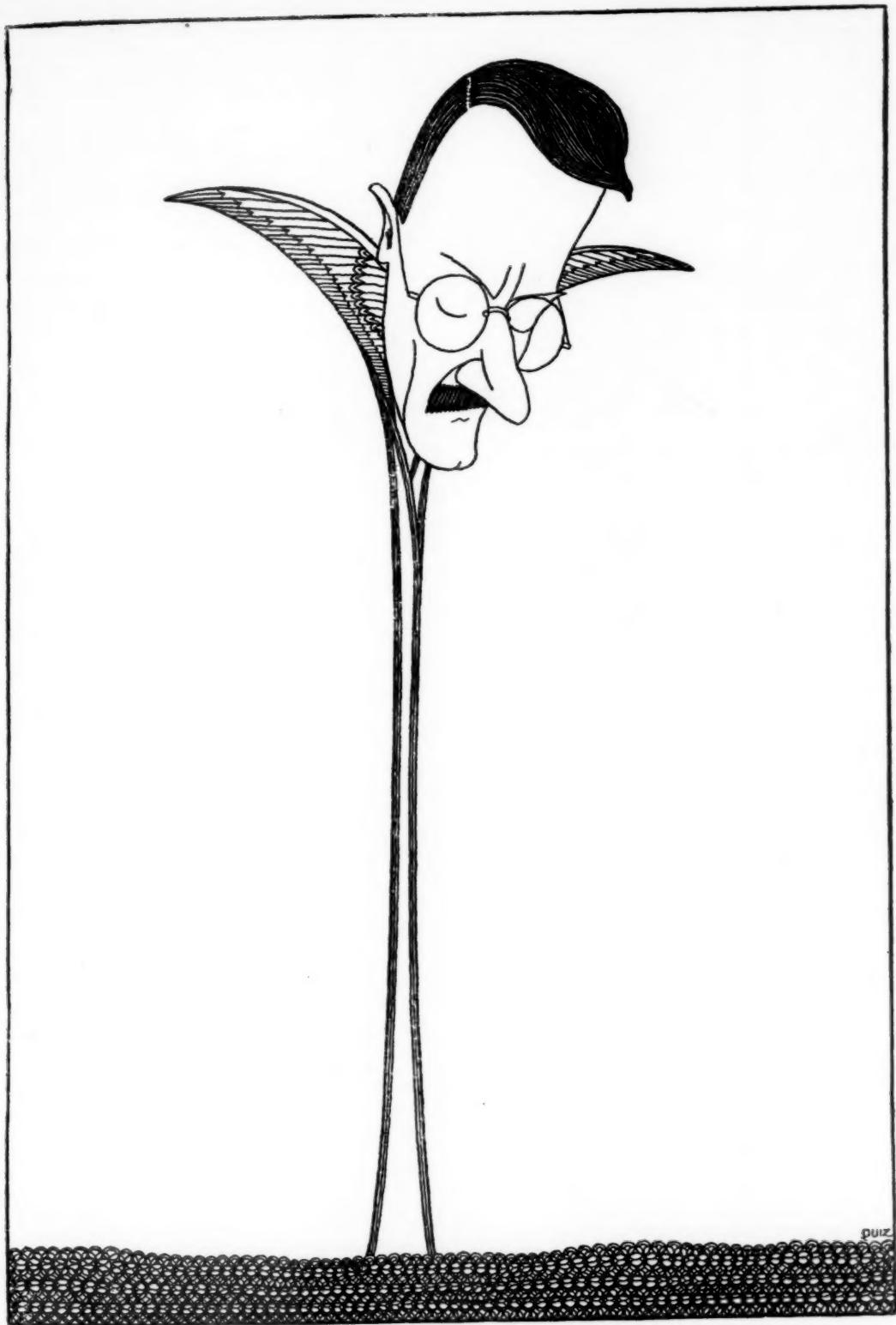
IN England nothing is less understood about Italy than Italian Nationalism. Englishmen are apt to find in this subject something ominous, as if Italians, in desiring to enlarge national ideals, were aiming at the peace of Europe. I have had the good fortune to meet Senator Enrico Corradini, who is the creator of Italian Nationalism as a political doctrine, and I have asked him to give me, for the readers of the SATURDAY REVIEW, a few details about this movement. But before putting down his words I must say something of the man. Corradini is a Tuscan, but now he lives in Rome. Besides having a degree in philosophy he is also a man of letters—a writer of plays and novels. In his 'Patria Lontana,' published in 1900, he wrote of Italian emigrants returning to their own country to fight in an Austro-Italian war as they did, indeed, later on, in the Great War. In 1903 he founded the paper *Il Regno* and since that date, which marks his passage from literature to militant politics, he has made many speeches, most of which are published. In 1910 he organized the Nationalist Society, and in 1911, with the help of other writers and politicians, he started the newspaper *L'Idea Nazionale*, which afterwards made much propaganda in favour of the war. One of the first acts of the Government of Mussolini was to make Corradini a member of the Senate, thus showing an appreciation of his whole-hearted work in the interests of his country.

It is a great pity that Corradini cannot lecture in English, to an English audience, because he is a man whose impressive face, calm presence, clear incisive voice, combined with his logical treatment of facts, would inspire even the most sentimental of British politicians into facing truth.

And now I will write down his words :

"Nationalism must be put into two divisions, one theoretical and the other practical. To speak of the first. We have been accused of taking our theories from the French; but that is not true, chiefly because French Nationalism looks at the past, and we aim at constructing something new. In fact I built my theory of Nationalism mainly on the phenomenon of emigration which, in France, does not exist. But to explain the essence of the Nationalist theory, I may say that ever since the French Revolution had proclaimed the rights of the citizen, the individual with all his needs had, little by little, become stronger than the State and thus democracy was created, having as its last result Socialism. Now from the days when these were current ideas, also in Italian politics, I had felt the need of restoring the authority of the State over the cult of the individual, and my theory of Nationalism constitutes the ideal law for this transformation. By

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ, No. 90

BRIG.-GEN. THE RT. HON. LORD THOMPSON, C.B.E., D.S.O.
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AIR

By 'Quiz'

it the nation is freed from the slavery of the present and is considered in the historical continuity of the race. For this reason Nationalism re-discovers the laws of the life of a people and, in this way, it is not only a purely local, but a universal theory.

"The practical part of Italian Nationalism, instead, can only be applied and understood when we consider Italian conditions before the war. Italy had then a weak government, and a weak foreign policy, and her expansion in the world, instead of aiming at the possession of colonies, exhausted itself in emigration. The Nationalist Party was started with the aim of fighting these weaknesses and of re-invigorating the whole of our political life. As these problems could not be understood by the crowd, I preferred to give the party a purely aristocratic character, and thus it was formed of a relatively limited number of people of the cultured classes. In this way we were able to be a living spiritual force and to push the country into a wider and more active policy, creating the ground for, and actually leading to, participation in the Great War."

Here I asked Senator Corradini about Nationalism and war in general.

"Nationalism accepts war as a natural law in the development of nations. Of course there are good wars and bad wars, as in every natural phenomenon there is good and evil; and I do not mean by this that I should encourage war, but there are wars by which a nation can change its history, and these are those to which I refer favourably. Such wars would also be useful for a nation in the development of its internal conditions, because they waken man to a more energetic morality and to a spirit of self-sacrifice. There is no need for me to remind you what wars have done for England, especially the war against Napoleon. But to keep to Italy. The facts now show that it was by war that the authority of the State has been restored (as aimed at by Nationalism) over that of the individual."

"Do you mean by this," I asked, "that Fascism is a practical realization of Nationalist doctrines?"

"Though I have fully explained the differences in the preface of my new book, 'Discorsi Politici,' I may, for the sake of brevity, say yes. Indeed the two parties, since April, 1923, have joined forces. It was I who wished this because I saw in Fascism the power of collecting and guiding the masses over which our small and altogether intellectual party had not chosen to act directly. Now Nationalists and Fascists all work together for the good of the country under a Government which opens an entirely new political and moral era. And perhaps not only for Italy."

Verse

THE KEYBOARD

THERE was once a cunning musician
Who played all day in the street;
And he played to the stolid grocers,
And he played for the hurrying feet.

He snatched sweet airs from the country,
And he ravelled them round men's hearts,
To the smack of the city noises
And the rumbling of the carts.

He played with the joys and the sorrows,
Till in melody rare they were wed.
How quaint is this cobbled alley,
Though his music has fled!

P. B.

Letters to the Editor

¶ The Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW welcomes the free expression in these columns of genuine opinion on matters of public interest, although he disclaims responsibility alike for the opinions themselves and the manner of their expression.

¶ Letters which are of reasonable brevity, and are signed with the writer's name, are more likely to be published than long and anonymous communications.

¶ Letters on topical subjects, intended for publication the same week, should reach us by the first post on Wednesday.

WHAT IS THE USE OF A BATTLESHIP?

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—I read with interest Mr. Anson West's letter which was published in the SATURDAY REVIEW some weeks ago and also Sir Percy Scott's reply thereto, which has just appeared. Like Sir Percy Scott I am a retired naval officer, unembittered by the realization that the navy has survived the loss of my services, and I hope, therefore, that you will permit me to furnish some comments on the assertions which Sir Percy makes.

Sir Percy states, between inverted commas, that "Battleships at night must run away from torpedo boats." I do not know the authority he is quoting, but I should very much like to know what losses were sustained by the British and German battle fleets on the night after Jutland, when the destroyers on both sides were straining every nerve to encompass the destruction of the enemy's capital ships and the British fleet, at any rate, had no thought but to maintain contact between the opposing forces. I think the answer would be a "nil return" and that destroyer officers would be the first to agree that not only at Jutland but all through the war, both by day and by night, destroyers fared very badly when opposed to heavier ships.

Admiral Scott would have us believe (though his ebullitions in the popular Press give a very different impression) that he was referring only to the Dardanelles operations when he stated that "our battleships ran away from a tiny German submarine." He says that those who could, ran as fast as possible into Mudros harbour and "those that delayed in the precipitous flight were sent to the bottom." The frigid facts are that only two old battleships were lost owing to submarine action; that there was an interval of forty-eight hours between the first loss and the second; that the losses occurred in May, 1915, and that battleships were regularly employed off the Gallipoli Peninsula, until the final evacuation in January, 1916. Since these facts can be verified by anyone who cares to take the necessary trouble, it might be expected that Sir Percy would rapidly change the subject. But having once strayed into the realms of fiction, he cannot resist the temptation to give full rein to fancy. He wonders "what the German submarine thought when he came to the surface and watched three or four battleships sinking and saw the sterns of the others running away so fast that he could not catch them." As no submarine has ever enjoyed this experience, I am unable to obtain any data; but in 1915 I was privileged to have a conversation with a very gallant submarine officer a few hours before he forced the Narrows for the third time. He recked little of the task before him, but he assured me that, seen through a periscope, there are few things more awe inspiring than a battlefleet "zig-zagging" at high speed.

And, surely, the Mediterranean battlefleet is not part of the defences of Malta? One always imagined that Malta was intended to shelter the battlefleet. We have of late been treated to some strange theories. We have been assured that bombs can be countered by Bibles and that the Liturgy is our first line of defence. But not even the present Government has suggested

that Malta shall be defended by lashing battleships to the breakwater with their guns trained to seaward.

It is not thus that Sir Percy Scott will shake our faith in the battleship. The late war has taught us conclusively that torpedo-carrying craft cannot decide a war unless the country which employs them has command of the surface of the water. And if we possess a battlefleet strong enough to ensure immunity to those vessels whose duty it is to destroy the aeroplane-carriers, torpedo-craft and submarines of the enemy, we have nothing to fear from any Mediterranean Power.

I am, etc.,
"EMERGENCY LIST"

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Once more your pages are enlivened by the remarks of our greatest naval humorist. Surely he must know the answer to his own query, or, maybe, being an Admiral of the old school, he really does not know. His references to submarine successes in the late war have no more bearing on the question than the remarks of a man beset by a swarm of bees. All of the incidents referred to took place in narrow waters. He makes no reference to those actions which were fought in the open sea, viz., Coronel and Falkland.

May one ask our Admiral a return question: What is a battleship? As a partial answer the following statement may serve. A battleship is a compromise, and cannot contain in one hull, however large, all the requirements of naval warfare. For this reason a number of hulls are employed. Of these the first in importance is the ship of the line. A ship capable of taking and giving the hardest blows. Subsidiary to this and in order of importance are cruisers, aircraft, destroyers and submarines. In narrow waters the subsidiary craft may be based on land defences, on the open sea they must be based upon the ship of the line.

May two more questions be asked? (1) Why, in these days of scientific achievement, are coloured navigation lights, with their limited range and liability to misreading, still used? (2) Why is it that ships which on practice-firing obtain 100 per cent. (more or less) of hits are only able in actual battle to obtain about .0025 per cent.?

I am, etc.,
H. S. RYLAND

London, S.E.12

THE PATH TO SOCIAL PEACE

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Your particularly gloomy article under the above heading seems to advise "Plain living and high thinking." Actually it suggests "High thinking and plain dying." Of course I except all those who could willingly exist on the dish of rats suggested by the writer of the article. But these would not include the gourmets of the SATURDAY REVIEW, one of whom might tell us how best to cook rats, before it is too late.

Such a result would be proof of the bankruptcy of our civilization, which has evidently, like many others, taken a wrong turning. Perhaps it is too late to retrace our steps, but could we do so, there is no doubt as to which turning we should take. Had we devoted one-tenth part of the energy to the improvement of our heredity that we have expended on the improvement of our environment, we would have found democracy a friend instead of a foe.

Both heredity and environment are important, but we have tried to improve (at an outrageous cost) the latter only. If the seed be bad enough, the better the cultivation the greater the loss.

I am, etc.,
GUY PORTER

Upper King's Cliff, Jersey, C.I.

COMMONSENSE ABOUT SPANISH SHAWLS

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—I read Mr. Gerald Kelly's article on Spanish Shawls, in the SATURDAY REVIEW of March 1, with great interest. While I agree entirely with most of what he says, there are one or two points in which I differ from him. He mentions, as one of the tests of a good shawl, that the fringe should be short and the knotted part little more than an inch deep. Now, I know from having seen them, that some of the most perfect examples of old family shawls in Spain have long, heavy fringes knotted to the depth of about five inches. In some cases these fringes may have been added by the owners, as Spanish women are very clever with their fingers, and most of them have known how to make these knotted fringes from childhood, the household linen being often adorned in this way. But, in the case of the very large, heavy shawls, I am inclined to think that they always had these long, knotted fringes. In these shawls a short fringe would look ridiculous and spoil the whole effect.

With regard to Mr. Kelly's warning that, in a shawl of bad quality the fringe will always be found sewn on all round, I have noticed that in the inferior shawls shown to-day in the London shops, the fringes are knotted into the material, and not sewn on.

Then Mr. Kelly seems to imply that there is only one correct way of wearing the *manton de Manila*; but at the *buñoladas* I have attended in different parts of Spain, I have seen it worn in many different ways. Not only did the fashion vary from one region to another, but the best dressed girls wore their *mantones* in almost any kind of way that took their fancy, always contriving to show off the embroidery to the best advantage.

Another point is the wearing of the comb. Mr. Kelly says that it should be worn in the centre of the head, not on one side; but here again the individuality of the Spanish woman rises superior to hard and fast rules. With the *mantilla* it is always worn in the centre, of course; but with the *manton*, when the hair is parted on the one side, as it often is, the comb looks better on the side, and the Spanish woman wears it so without compunction.

I am, etc.,
PHYLLIS WALTER

19 Cavendish Square, W.1

SUBURBAN RAILWAY TRAVEL

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—The time has come when someone should speak up for the daily records of speed and efficiency achieved by our suburban railway services. In particular I should like to advance the claims of the South-Eastern and Chatham branch of the Southern Railway. Anyone unacquainted from regular experience with normal conditions on the suburban routes of this railway is likely to be incredulous of the feats performed. Even travellers have become so accustomed to these things that they no longer give them the attention they deserve.

Allow me then, Sir, to cite you a few brief examples, for I consider it right that the Company should be given public credit for what are, without doubt, astonishing achievements. I travel fairly regularly to Charing Cross from a station $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles distant by a train in the morning scheduled to make the journey in twenty-one minutes: i.e., at an average speed of something over 20 m.p.h. That, Sir, you must agree, is wonderful going. I must admit that I have chosen for my instance one of the better trains on this route. (That is to say, there are worse. These take twenty-five and twenty-six minutes to do the journey.) My train is advertised to stop but once between the station at which I join it and London Bridge; yesterday morning (an average performance) it stopped four times. But

taking into consideration the length of mileage covered, this, Sir, is surely not excessive. Between London Bridge and Charing Cross it stopped twice more (exclusive of the scheduled stop at Waterloo Junction) and arrived at Charing Cross after its long and hazardous expedition only seven minutes late. Thus it had maintained the remarkable average speed for the 7½ miles of roughly 15 m.p.h.

I have selected a day at random lest I should be charged with favouritism towards the Company. One can safely rely on one or more slacks on the approach to London Bridge. Engine-drivers seem incapable of making this journey without stopping to admire the particularly lovely scenery through which the line here runs. I may add that neither this train, nor any others in which it has been my fortune to travel on this route, is provided with any system of heating, a fact calculated (particularly in an unusually rigorous winter like the present) to brace the nerves and harden the fibres of travellers, and as such to be heartily commended in an age in which we are prone to be softened and deteriorated by the luxuries of modern transport. Doubtless with the same end in view, the Company has arranged that their carriages shall admit a maximum of draught round and under the doors and windows, convenient gaps in the framework being provided for the purpose.

I write of third-class conditions; there is now no second-class. Third-class passengers, being a little lower than the angels, are accommodated in the usual 5-10 a-side compartments; and in order to enhance the rigours of the journey, many of these have plain wooden backs all the way up, only the actual seats being cushioned, but unsprung. Such, however, is the consideration of the Company for its clients that these compartments occasionally bear some evidence of having received attention from a brush or duster; more often, I confess, they do not.

But heat and springs are not the only luxuries wisely withheld from the pampered traveller. A few evenings ago I journeyed down to my station from Charing Cross in a coach which had no light. At first I was at a loss to comprehend the motive which lay behind what I felt sure, knowing the ways of the Company, must be a philanthropic act; but presently I understood that the darkness had been thoughtfully provided out of care for the eyesight of passengers, who are sometimes tempted to try to read by the light usually supplied, with results disastrous to their eyes. A friend of mine related a similar experience to me which occurred on a main-line train of the same railway one night about a fortnight ago. This main-line train accomplished the feat of making a 25-mile journey in 110 minutes, with unlighted compartments. Truly a notable achievement!

Who, Sir, shall dare say that Britain is decadent while we have men and women of the Bulldog breed ready to face the hardships of suburban travel? I write more in sorrow than in anger; but if a revolution ever breaks out in this country it is more likely to be the work of exasperated season-ticket holders than of those peculiar gentlemen with red ties and long hair whom one is led to believe are dangerous Communists. I enclose my card.

I am, etc.,

"SEASON TICKET HOLDER"

London, S.E.

FAIR PLAY FOR BRITISH FILMS

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR.—A letter appearing under this heading in the SATURDAY REVIEW on March 1 contains in its second paragraph several statements which are not only entirely untrue, but are calculated to have a very damaging effect on my personal reputation in the film industry, both here and abroad.

The Kinema Club, of which I am one of the founders and the present Vice-Chairman, was not formed for

screen artistes but for everybody engaged in film production in this country. It is not now and never has been "controlled by producers and agents." It is controlled by its own members, of whom screen artistes form by far the greater proportion both of the club and of all the committees.

The more serious statement, however, is with regard to the *Motion Picture Studio*, of which I am the founder and Editor, in addition to editing the *Kinemagraph Weekly*. This paper was started in the interests of all engaged in British film production. It has never altered its policy, nor should I ever allow the policy of any paper with which I was connected to be altered at the behest of any section of the industry. Producers at the Kinema Club have never "threatened to exclude it from the Club unless its policy was altered," and the suggestion contained in the next sentence that "it is now the official Club organ, and grievances are no longer ventilated therein unless producers and agents approve," is totally untrue, and must have been known to be untrue by the writer of the letter in question.

The *Motion Picture Studio* always has been the official organ of the club, and no one except its proprietors, Odhams Press, Ltd., and its Editor have ever exercised any control whatever over its policy.

Having regard to the serious damage which the publication of such a statement in the SATURDAY REVIEW may do to my personal reputation, particularly in the implication of control by any section of the film industry, I am sure that in fairness you will give this letter as much prominence as you did the letter in which such utterly irresponsible statements were made.

I am, etc.,

FRANK A. TILLEY

93 Long Acre, W.C.2

[We gladly give publicity to this correction, which, after making enquiries, we are able heartily to endorse. In any case we need not remind our readers that the appearance of a letter in our columns by no means implies our agreement with, or even approval of, its contents.—ED. S.R.]

'BACK TO METHUSELAH'

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR.—It would appear that both the Church and vegetarianism are opposed to rejuvenation. The Rev. Basil Bourchier speaks for the one and Mr. George Bernard Shaw for the other. Neither has much of importance to say, least of all Mr. Shaw. After quoting Mrs. Atherton, authoress of 'Black Oxen,' the monkey-gland film, and stating that "the discovery of the gland treatment is to-day what the discovery of the germ theory was to the past generation," he goes on to say that rejuvenation will afford another excuse for "an enormously lucrative quackery."

Very few people—assuredly not those who witnessed 'Back to Methuselah'—take Mr. Shaw seriously. We know that he would like to see the process of payment reversed with patient and doctor: that the doctor should fee the patient in return for the privilege of attending upon him. There is quackery in every profession—even that which Mr. Shaw follows offers a few signal examples—but the medical world has been well weeded of charlatans nowadays.

Rejuvenation is a great subject. It is not being handled by quacks but by competent surgeons who see the aid that science can give to the generations of the future, even the present generation, and perhaps (may I write it?) even to Mr. Shaw himself. You never can tell.

I am, etc.,

"HARLEY STREET"

Harley Street, W.

SKI-ING

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—The versatility and adaptability of Norsk skiers had already been demonstrated some years before the war in the Alpine districts—e.g., by Leif Berg, who was invited there in 1905—for Norwegians are in the main unaccustomed to really steep country, or, as they call it, *kupert terroeng*.

This versatility was again demonstrated at the Olympic Games (ski section) held a few weeks ago at Chamounix. In the 50 kilometre race there, Thorlief Haug (the winner), followed by three more Norwegians, easily beat all the other competitors—the fifth man, a Swedish Lapp, was beaten by over a quarter of an hour. This Norsk victory was all the more remarkable because three-quarters of the journey was more or less on the flat of the valley, a " terrain " in which the Finns and Lapps and some Swedes are generally regarded as supreme. Collin and Niku, the two most famous Finnish representatives, were already " beaten to a frazzle " at their own game when they gave up after Collin had broken a ski. This goes to show that the Finnish victory in the long-distance race at Holmenkollen in 1922—Collin was first and Niku second—was in the nature of a fluke due to the heavy going, and that there was, after all, some justification for the claim made at the time on behalf of Haug and other noted Norsk runners that they were beaten chiefly owing to bad luck with their ski-wax—it is a remarkable thing that many Norwegians have still a lot to learn about the mysteries of the art of greasing the running surface of their ski.

The great performance of the Norwegians at Chamounix in January seems to have frightened away all real opposition in the 50 kilometre cross country race at the recent Holmenkollen Championship meeting. I scarcely expected any Swiss to compete, and the only foreign representative was Rath from Czechoslovakia; he came in last of about one hundred competitors, taking nearly seven hours over the job. A snowstorm which started raging about 1 p.m. made the going very heavy, of course, especially for the later starters (the competitors are dispatched at half-minute intervals, commencing at 10 a.m.).

For the sixth time in his wonderful career, Thorlief Haug, of Drammen, won this 50 kilometre race, thus establishing a record that will probably never be beaten in our time—he had last year already equalled Bergendahl's famous record of five wins. Haug won in 4 hrs. 19 mins., in spite of the snowstorm; 3rd and 4th respectively were Maardalen and Gröttumsbraaten (my own particular " pet " as a stylist), who in reversed order had occupied those positions at Chamounix.

Although Lauritz Bergendahl in 1913 and 1914 accomplished the 50 kilometres at Holmenkollen in under 4 hrs. 5 mins.—times not approached by the present champion—and despite the fact that, in my opinion, the former was in ski-jumping usually slightly more " certain " off the platform than Haug, one must I think regard the latter as the finest all-rounder ever known, for his performance at Chamounix stamps him as equal to, and even perhaps better than, Bergendahl on the flat—Lauritz before the war could hold his own with such first-class Finns as Koskenkorva over long distances in flat country.

The ski-jumping at Holmenkollen this year was not up to the usual high standard, although Tullin Thams, as always, made two jumps of over forty metres. The meeting was made noteworthy by the jumping of the German skier, Karl Hailer, whose performance combined with his splendid pluck justified all the tremendous applause he received, for while serving in the German Flying Corps during the war he lost a leg, and appeared at Holmenkollen with an artificial limb. His second jump of 35 metres in splendid style will always stand as one of the greatest feats ever known.

I am, etc.,
" TOURNEBROCHE "

Reviews

THE PROBLEM OF MONEY

Bankers and Credit. By Hartley Withers.
Nash and Grayson. 6s. net.

M R. WITHERS begins with an introductory chapter on the pre-war monetary system, followed by a brief and scathing criticism of the methods employed by politicians to finance the war, but by far the greater part of his book is concerned with the proposals for the reform of currency and credit lately put forward from almost every side. This is as it should be, for Mr. Withers is a recognized authority, and he is also a champion of orthodoxy, which needs the ablest defenders in view of the brilliance and persistence of some of its critics.

Indeed, now that the academic opponents of our present monetary arrangements have been reinforced by such bodies as the Federation of British Industries, which in October last asked for a Government Commission upon the subject, we may be certain that a long and fierce battle is to be waged. The scapegoat of all our financial troubles (duly seized upon by the Federation) has long been the Cunliffe Committee, which in 1918 issued its famous report on Currency and Foreign Exchange, wherein it was urged that the conditions necessary to the maintenance of an effective gold standard should be restored without delay. According to Mr. Withers, who makes a careful examination, both the Cunliffe Report and the Financial Facilities Report were quite innocent documents telling the Government to leave off the manufacture of new currency and credit, to re-establish our legal tender on the foundation laid by the Bank Act of 1844, and informing industry that the capital required should be found through the process of saving and investment, instead of through the extension of bank credits. " But they were very far from preaching drastic deflation and rapid contraction of credits."

Mr. Withers affirms, taking as his authority Governor Strong, of the Federal Reserve Board of New York, that the fall in prices began in the Far East, and spread to the rest of the world, while in a postscript he gives the conclusion of the whole matter. " The collapse in trade began abroad, long before there had been in England any reduction in purchasing power as measured by the volume of bank deposits. Bank deposits shrank because trade was inactive and prices were lower and credit was not wanted." We agree with this as a whole, if not in detail; one has only to remember the indignation which prevailed against high prices to accept a consumers' strike as the natural explanation of the collapse which occurred in 1920-21. Statistics are completely against the theory of the break being produced by too sudden deflation, and, as to subsequent depression, we cannot overlook the European situation and our own domestic disturbances.

But when all is said to show our hearty agreement with Mr. Withers on this point, an element of doubt still remains. It is clear that many evils have been wrongly alleged to be results of a policy designed to secure the restoration of the pre-war gold standard. Nevertheless, have the criticisms any weight at all? The issue resolves itself into a choice between devaluation and deflation—the problem of whether the standard of value should be fixed at somewhere near its existing value, or whether we should patiently endeavour to restore it to pre-war value. Mr. Withers deals effectively with a number of minor enthusiasts who apparently want unlimited inflation, but devaluation hardly receives a consideration which enables us to estimate its merits, and not all of the arguments for a return to the pre-war gold standard are separately convincing. For example, pleading common honesty, Mr. Withers says that before the war foreigners left and kept money here because they knew that when they wanted it they could take it back in gold, and in justice to them—and, presumably to pre-war holders of fixed interest bearing

stocks generally—we should put back our currency on its old gold basis as soon as possible. From the point of view of strict justice alone we should have to secure for them, if that were practicable, the original purchasing power of their money, which fact Mr. Withers recognizes in his sentence: "For the fact that gold has lost much of its pre-war buying power we can hardly be held responsible." The act, therefore, would seem to be partly of the nature of a gesture rather than a satisfaction of the claims of absolute justice, and, obviously, to restore the value of pre-war holdings by deflation means improving also the value of war and post-war holdings, which action would hardly be in accordance with the interests of the community as a whole. Nor do we feel it to be a very weighty objection to the use of index numbers for the purpose of regulating purchasing power, that there would probably be plenty of people who would argue that the index numbers, which are supposed to record the average movement of the prices of the principal commodities, "were all wrong, and that prices are not really rising at all." One reference to the Fisher plan hardly seems conspicuously fair. Mr. Withers quotes an opinion of Professor Lehfeldt that the system would work, and that it would confer great benefit on a world plagued with ill-regulated currencies, but it would be necessary to convince the commercial and political classes of its merits, to which Mr. Withers damagingly adds "thereby seeming to imply that neither of these classes is likely to show much eagerness in making the mental effort necessary for grasping the beauties of the system." But possibly this is intended as a reflection upon the classes rather than upon the system.

If we do not feel that Mr. Withers has dealt with the claims of devaluation as extensively as one could wish, he puts the case for a return to the pre-war gold standard with all his usual clarity, and will reassure doubters, if he does not make converts. Perhaps after all we should take the advice of one so wise in money matters and "leave index numbers, stabilization, international conventions and Consortiums of Banks of Issue in the hands of the learned and able gentlemen who understand these matters . . ." We certainly share the view of Professor Lehfeldt that we should first restore the simple gold standard, as being familiar to everyone, and then, since no one can claim that it is perfect, give serious attention to the many suggestions which have been made for a reformed currency.

AN ILLEGITIMATE VOLUME

Studies and Sketches. By the Rt. Hon. H. H. Asquith. Hutchinson. 10s. 6d. net.

THIS is not a book in any sense, unless a book can consist in its shell. There is paper here, numbered pages, letterpress and "boards and cloth"; and if these accidents make a book, here we have a book; but in no other sense. The sporadic essays here tied together in a certainly neat bundle have nothing in common except that they were written by the same man; and if he had not been distinguished and much before the public and therefore a more or less safe publisher's "draw," they would not have been published in book form at all. Selection there is none—any subject will do: all knowledge is pressed into service—history, biography, literature, oratory. Everything human is touched on—the touch is good—and nothing fathomed. No doubt these are pleasant pages to turn over for those who want to waste time intelligently, for as they come from nothing and lead to nothing, they give the reader no trouble. Yet they are about serious things; so the cultured person reads them without imperilling his pose.

So little have these 'Studies and Sketches' (they should rather have been called 'Sketches and Studies') in common that it is impossible to discuss their subjects, or we should be dealing with half the world and many ages. Any one of them would do for a peg on which to hang an article, but on the whole collection

—it is not even a collection in truth—it is impossible to hang anything except the question whether such volumes can legitimately be published. Nearly every chapter in the volume is an essay or address composed for a single special occasion and on that occasion delivered. This was its reason of being and so far the object is well attained. But that which is good for one moment is not necessarily of any use for another moment; still less can that which was written and intended for an evening's mild diversion serve for all time. Book form implies permanent value, and if the form appears without the value, something of a fraud is suggested; and only a very strong case can answer the suggestion. We find no such case here. Even the pieces which were not made for a special occasion had been published before in a form which showed that they were not expected to last. They lived and had their day and died; and if any one of antiquarian turn of mind wishes to dig them up he will find them buried in the back numbers of the *Spectator*. Let them rest in peace. We believe Mr. Asquith himself would entirely agree with what we are saying; but he was too good-tempered to resist his publishers' importunity or the clamour of hero-worshippers. We admit that odds and ends do need tying up in bundles to be burnt or put away. So tied up they may look quite neat, even picturesque, but they are tied up simply because they cannot easily be disposed of otherwise. These odds and ends on the contrary are tied up for exhibition.

BEHIND THE SCENES

The Letters of Madame. Translated and Edited by Gertrude Scott Stevenson. Vol I: 1661-1708. Chapman and Dodd. 18s. net.

Two Royalist Spies of the French Revolution. By G. Lenotre. Translated by Bernard Miall. Fisher Unwin. 15s. net.

IT is ever the Duke of Saint-Simon or Madame that we come across in any study, superficial or close, of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in France. Saint-Simon, prince of all memoir writers, reaches out to Tacitus and Shakespeare in austerity and penetrating imagination. Compared with the impassioned man of genius, Madame seems the mere gossip. But they are twin spirits. The Duke, closeted at nights, wreaks his vengeance on Court and Government; and Elizabeth Charlotte of Bavaria, Princess Palatine, Duchess of Orleans, first cousin of our George I and mother of the French Regent, seeks consolation in endless correspondence with her women relatives and friends. Each confirms and completes the other. After them there is no more to be said, and much matter for reflection.

Madame, the Stuart entirely Germanized, cuts an odd figure at Court. She is alien, incongruous, almost grotesque; is blunt, unconventional, disconcerting. "I am very frank and human, and always say whatever is in my mind." With the figure of a "Swiss boor," she complacently exaggerates her plainness. Unlike the Court ladies, gambling and drink have no charms for her; she will even pay her debts, when her pinched revenues allow. She loves the open air—twenty-six falls from horseback—and the play; collects medals—including the derisive—and spaniels. But it is her sheet upon sheet day by day that makes up for having a vicious fop of a husband, and a son who, with much ability, is corrupt in spite of her and beyond her reforming. Of herself, she is the decent woman—one would almost say the decent fellow. For she would have preferred to be a man; and you must not ask her about matrimony unless you require discouragement. Her foible is prompt stickling for birth and precedence; and thereby her detestation of Mme. de Maintenon, semi-acknowledged Queen, pink of French measure and delicate grace, her special antipathy. The "slut," the "drab," "old slops," any handy term is good enough for the creature. And those English, she has



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a grudge against them: were they not unspeakable in their treatment of her cousin Charles I? Her other foible, by which we profit, is her insatiate newsmongering. Bring her news of any sort, and you are in favour. In your presence, she scribbles on and on, revealing France, and herself withal. What she sees, she sees clearly; minces nothing, uses no veil. Already, things are heading straight for the Revolution. Her philosophy may be summed up in the German proverb she quotes: Everyday something new, and seldom anything good. For religion—well, she has shaped her own private and modest creed. Is she born or grown disillusioned? She just escapes cynicism or pessimism, being good of heart, even affectionate on rare opportunity. With Thackeray, she could murmur *Vanitas Vanitatum* without end. And the volume of letters to follow will deepen her murmur. Meanwhile one congratulates the translator and editor for an edition far away the best and most complete, and for annotation equally succinct and useful.

Suppose the Revolution come, the Reign of Terror ended, the *émigrés* in their full flow of imbecility and illusion. M. G. Lenotre, the trustworthy historian, submits the Memoirs of Fauche-Borel to verification. Was ever such unfathomable stupidity as that of Fauche-Borel's, such indefeasible capacity for illusion? This Swiss bookseller, sanguine and self-important, only waits occasion to become the babbling megalomaniac. Turning secret agent and intermediary in the matter of Pichegru, henceforth he is "the fly on the wheel" of the Emigration; the comic frog blown out to the ox. Bosom-friend of the great, and hinge of mighty event, how shall he keep his head, or ever be deflated? He is the comedian in all good faith, ever cheating himself and being cheated, victim of what surely is the Grand Hoax. For years he feeds the illusions or hopes of the *émigrés* and the British Government as to a Royalist association in Paris, embracing the never-to-be-divulged Fouché, Talleyrand, and Napoleon himself, who burn for Bourbon restoration when time is ripe. It is the long secret duel, with later public charges and counter-charges, between his credulity and the cunning of Perlet, ex-Royalist and constrained spy. The Revolutionary secret police concoct and sustain the whole idea for amusement and profit, hoping also to draw Fauche-Borel to Paris and lay him by the heels. At last, his bubble is pricked. Disillusioned, he flings himself down from a tower, a tragic-comic counterpart of Ibsen's Solness and Browning's Léonce Miranda. But before that, the witch's cauldron he stirred so zealously, the English gold lavished upon and through him! Dumas père once sat next him at dinner; but it is to M. Lenotre that it is given, with him for theme, to run the whole gamut of romantic adventure and the detective novel.

OLIVE SCHREINER

The Life of Olive Schreiner. By S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner. Fisher Unwin. 21s. net.

THE praise which Mr. Cronwright-Schreiner would probably like best to receive for the biography in which he has enshrined the memory of his wife is that it is worthy to hold a place in literature beside 'The Story of an African Farm'—that strange, sad and beautiful book. Such praise we think that few readers will grudge him. Olive Schreiner—as Scott observed in connexion with the less able Joanna Baillie, one does not say Miss Sappho—was a woman of unusual and striking personality, so elusive of ordinary definitions and standards of character that even those who knew her best would have found it exceedingly difficult to fix it upon the printed page. This task Mr. Cronwright-Schreiner has achieved with remarkable skill. His simple, direct and forcible style, combined with intimate knowledge of his subject and native tact in expression, makes this biography one of the outstanding books of its kind. His Muse evidently said to him, as to Sidney: "Look in thine heart and

write!" His good taste is as notable as his complete outspokenness in this portrait of a woman of genius who was as trying in some ways as she was fascinating in others. He expresses gratitude to that masterly psychologist, Mr. Havelock Ellis—to whom the book is fittingly dedicated—for constant assistance in his work. But we fancy that it is to the author's own modest and straightforward mind that we should give the main credit for the masterly execution of a highly difficult and intricate task.

So little is generally known about Olive Schreiner's early life that we are specially grateful for the extremely interesting account of her descent, family and education to which Mr. Cronwright-Schreiner devotes the first third of his volume. Olive Schreiner herself was singularly averse from allowing anything to be published on these subjects in her lifetime. One of the most characteristic things she ever wrote was the scathing letter in which she reprimanded a journalist who had asked for an interview in which, among other things, she was to answer the question of how she was educated:

To give you the true story of my education (she replied) would mean the rending open of my heart before you, the describing to you of the (to me) most sacred and beautiful hours of my childhood and girlhood, the books I loved and studied, the scenes I visited, the influence of a thousand benevolent and stimulating things upon my mind, matters to me so sacred and intimate that I would not discuss them with my closest friend.

Fortunately Mr. Cronwright-Schreiner was able to get inside this mental barrier, and with the help of not only what his wife confided to him in later years but a quantity of her early letters and diaries, besides the recollections of the few who then knew her at all intimately, he has been able to draw a picture of her girlish environment which, when read in conjunction with the 'African Farm,' give all that is required. Few novelists ever wrote a book more truly autobiographic than Olive Schreiner's one great performance in literature. Three at least of the main characters, Waldo, Lyndall and Em, represent diverse sides of her own rich and impetuous nature. To this Mr. Cronwright-Schreiner adds a full and most readable account of her family and friends, the raw materials of many novels which she might have written if the fates had willed it. The later part of this biography helps us to perceive why Olive Schreiner was never able to repeat her first triumph, and shows in what multiform channels her amazing energy and vitality dissipated themselves. It is a worthy monument to a writer of unquestioned but ill-balanced genius.

A HISTORY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE

A Short History of American Literature. Edited by W. P. Trent, J. Erskine, S. P. Sherman and C. von Doren. Cambridge University Press. 15s. net.

THE patriotism of American professors leads them to exaggerate the quality of their national literature, which is by no means contemptible, but has not hitherto extended to such legitimate proportions as those of any of the larger European countries. The volume before us is welcome as a return to some species of moderation, and we are told that it is an "abridgement" of a history of American literature in four tomes, which we do not happen to have seen. Without having seen it, however, we may confidently assert that the beauties of the theme are not so numerous or so varied as to require four volumes to illustrate them. We are satisfied with what the editors consider the present "short" history. We may remark that in 1903 the first-named of the new editors published a 'Short History of American Literature' unaided. We hardly see why another boiling-down of the famous four volumes was required so soon. The magnified scale has become the habit with American writers, who forget that their literature is mainly a creation of the nineteenth century, and that ours has

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flourished for seven hundred years. National feeling, however, must be allowed to take the place of a sense of proportion.

The new venture, however, possesses one considerable advantage over its predecessors. Almost all American handbooks waste an inordinate space in discussing the books produced on the other side of the Atlantic before the Revolution. The early colonial verse and the late colonial prose are wholly undeserving of this attention. Such odd productions as 'The Single Cobbler of Agawam' and the ravings of Mather Byles are curiosities, but we may broadly say that nothing previous to 'Knickerbocker' is properly to be considered literature. If this excludes Benjamin Franklin, we are sorry for it, but must retain our opinion. It is to the advantage of the present 'Small History' that it does not waste our time over 'The Bloody Tenent made yet more Bloody,' but, after a brief and mechanical obeisance to Jonathan Edwards and Franklin, starts fairly with Washington Irving, who is really the founder of American literature.

This book is, in fact, not a history but a group of biographical and critical essays, contributed by no fewer than six and twenty writers. It is obvious that in such an arrangement there must be great divergence of opinion and an inequality of merit. On the whole, however, the work is very well done, with moderation and good taste. The crucial points, of course, are Poe and Whitman. Mr. Killis Campbell, who is a leading Poe expert, is excellent on the former; Mr. Emery Holloway not unsympathetic, but a little hasty and superficial, on the latter. Even to-day, academic America cannot forgive the rest of the world for unanimously considering Whitman and Poe her foremost writers.

THE TRICKS OF THE TRADE

The Gentle Art of Authorship. By C. E. Lawrence. Cape. 3s. 6d. net.
Arnold Bennett. By F. J. Harvey Darton. Nisbet. 2s. net.

BY a pleasing coincidence, we have before us both a volume on how to produce commercial literature and a volume on the writer of our time who has most successfully done it. Mr. Arnold Bennett, to be sure, has done a great deal that does not fall within the category; but we are not concerned here with 'The Old Wives' Tale,' or with 'Riceyman Steps.' There is, as everyone knows, another Mr. Arnold Bennett, who can with amazing efficiency deliver the goods which authorities like Mr. Lawrence recommend. It seems to us that the novice who approaches the business of producing and selling literary matter would learn a great deal more from a critical examination of the methods of the lesser Mr. Arnold Bennett than from the perusal of manuals by such instructors as Mr. Lawrence. Not that Mr. Lawrence lacks knowledge and experience, but that he is not quite clear what he would have from his pupils. The first part of his book abounds in vague counsels of perfection, unhelpful to the writer with low ideals because they are not precise enough, and altogether superfluous to the writer who has realized that literature is an art. Mr. Lawrence seems unaware of the fact that "no secret can be told to any who divined it not before," and that literary training will have value only as it enables the pupil either to become more completely himself or to become a shrewd manufacturer for the market. A nice question arising out of these two books is how much writing is beneficial to an author in the early days of his career. In the year 1899, as Mr. Harvey Darton reminds us, Mr. Arnold Bennett wrote 335,340

words, including 224 articles and stories, a serial, the greater part of another serial, a book of plays, and a novel. Practice on this scale may be as ruinous to the young writer as indolence, and if waiting on inspiration is apt to become loafing, continual writing is likely to drain the mind. Again, there is the question of that study of the best models which Mr. Lawrence naturally urges, and against him we may recall Walter Pater's fear lest Kipling, if read by him at all, would get between him and his page when next he took up his pen. The truth here probably is that the young writer should read only those things which are to his purpose, but this too is a counsel of perfection, for only very exceptional writers, Chattertons or Rimbauds, have known in early youth what their purpose was. We must make another exception; for has not Mr. Arnold Bennett always known whither he would go, and have not his books good and bad, literary and commercial, been done in accordance with a fixed programme?

CRYSTALLOGRAPHY

The Natural History of Crystals. By A. E. H. Tutton. Kegan Paul. 15s. net.

IT would be an impertinence here to criticize a treatise on crystallography by Dr. Tutton, F.R.S., who is well known to all students as one of the highest authorities in this country on "the ethics of the dust." It is enough to say that his new book is an introduction to the subject intended for "the general reader more or less interested in natural science." For such readers, in whom we may fairly assume a moderate acquaintance with chemistry and physics, no more lucid and orderly account of the present position of our knowledge could be desired. Dr. Tutton has a remarkable faculty of clear exposition, in language as simple as is consistent with accuracy and brevity; we may call attention in illustration to the concise explanation of the modern electronic theory of atomic constitution introduced in Chapter X, and say that it would be impossible to give a better account of this matter in six pages. For students of all grades, from the most advanced to those who can but spell, Dr. Tutton's book should be most helpful and suggestive.

To the general reader its chief interest, perhaps, will be found in the fact that it chronicles one of the minor romances of science. Since Dr. Tutton's book on 'Crystals' in the International Scientific Series was published in 1911, the study of crystallography has been revolutionized by Dr. Max Laue's discovery at Munich that the reticular structure of crystals would furnish natural diffraction gratings for X rays, since the distances between the atoms are of an order comparable with the wave-lengths of the X rays—roughly about one five-hundred millionth part of an inch. "The moment was an anxious one," as Dr. Tutton feelingly observes, for those who had laboriously arrived at conclusions as to the internal structure of crystals by physical or geometrical methods. Fortunately this new and fruitful method of investigation has absolutely confirmed "practically the whole of the natural history of crystals" as it had previously been excogitated. The most novel and interesting part of Dr. Tutton's book is devoted to an account of the genesis of Dr. Laue's discovery and the results which have been obtained from it by Sir William Bragg and other workers. Incidentally these researches have "led directly to an experimental proof of the atomic structure theory, and actually revealed the existence of the outer electrons on their shells." There could be no better illustration of the essential unity of all physical science, and indeed of its fundamental soundness.

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CRICISM by contrast can easily be overdone: one reads (or writes) that Mr. Smith lacks the divine fire of Shelley, when really, perhaps, his object was to rival what Mr. Squire called "the rich indomitable coo" of the late Mrs. Florence Barclay. But when one gets, almost simultaneously, two books of short stories, so alike in their patient cultivation of purely intellectual devices, and so different in their quality and texture, as Mr. Armstrong's 'The Bazaar' and Miss Gerould's 'Conquistador,' contrast comes as a question to the mind, and one must try to answer it.

Miss Gerould is, if the phrase may be allowed—it is the only one to meet the case—"as clever as they make them." She is so clever that at times she is merely irritating. But in spite of that she has written some admirable stories. Cleverness, however, grows on one like drink. The dose has to be repeated at briefer intervals and in larger quantities, and in the end a talent dies and is buried and has only an epigram for epitaph. I am not suggesting that Miss Gerould is anything like as far gone as that. 'Conquistador' is rather in the nature of a warning, a bad attack which one hopes and believes will not be fatal. There are four stories in this volume. They are all tricked out, bespangled and bestarred, with suggestions of difficulty, remoteness, rarity. The first tells of a man who, half-American and half-Spanish by blood, is adopted as heir by his uncle, the feudal chieftain of Santa Eulalia in Mexico, and becomes a Spaniard in everything except his attitude towards married love. He is still devoted to a young American woman, who, for those fragile inexplicable reasons which make the first chapters of novels, has left him for many years under the impression that she doesn't love him. So he goes back home and asks her to marry him. She has loved him all the time, but she doesn't want to live at Santa Eulalia. Tragedy! In the second story, an unsophisticated young woman is shocked to find out that the young man she loves indulges himself, while professing love for her, in the most sordid sexual irregularities; especially, to find out that he cannot see why he shouldn't. In the third, a young woman is cast on a desert island—a small one—with a man whom she dislikes, and, although he behaves with correctness and discretion—apart from occasional verbal asperity—she is so much upset by the physical intimacy involved that she is subsequently unable to marry the man she loves, or anyone else. In the last story, a missionary falls in love with a girl and finds out that she is his sister. Now the interesting thing is that not one of these stories has the slightest originality of texture. Why should it be tragic that a young woman does not want to live in Mexico? It is not tragic. Suppose I live in Birmingham and woo a girl who lives in Clapham, and she does not like me well enough to face Birmingham for my sake? The only thing to be said is that she does not love me very much. True, that might be a tragedy—if I loved her so much that I was willing to settle in Clapham for her. But in 'Conquistador' neither of the young people cares for the other enough to matter: the suggestion that they do so is only a feint; and the quickness of the hand

fails to deceive the eye. The second plot is commonplace, the third ridiculous, the fourth old. Age is not fatal to a plot, of course; there is a sense in which every plot *must* be old: what is wrong with Miss Gerould's treatment is the affectation of novelty. That is the nemesis of cleverness.

Now turn to Mr. Armstrong. He too is clever, but he writes so well, with such restraint, such mastery over the individual sentences, that there is no interstice through which mere cleverness can raise its head. There is a modesty in his work. Indeed, there is much too much of that rare and engaging quality. For it leads Mr. Armstrong to waste great stretches of his time—and ours—in imitations of Mr. De la Mare at Mr. De la Mare's worst. That exquisite genius lacks one gift—the narrative; his 'Seaton's Aunt,' a laboured performance, is the last thing that even his most ardent admirer ought to copy; yet 'Little Miss Millett,' far the longest tale in Mr. Armstrong's collection, is nothing but an equally laboured parallel to it. 'Helm Hall' shows the same influence, and fails in the same way. As for the title-story, it is the feeblest satire I have ever seen in print. Satire, indeed, would seem to be out of Mr. Armstrong's line—witness the professor's argument in "The Pursuit of the Swallow": "Daisies are not noticed in the Botany Book, therefore they do not exist." It is not safe to make again a joke which has once been made by Voltaire; and this is the very argument of Pangloss when he found experience in contradiction to his theory: "Je suis toujours de mon premier sentiment, car enfin je suis philosophe; il ne me convient pas de me dédire, Leibnitz ne pouvant pas avoir tort . . ."

From all these errors, I have suggested and I insist, Mr. Armstrong could have been saved by a better conceit of himself. He can *write*. When he is content to express his own feelings and opinions, he writes admirably. 'Escape' is true to common experience, strong and vivid. 'In the Park' and 'Farmer Brock's Funeral' are good because they are direct: 'Interview with a Genius' is no narrative, but an extremely able and thorough essay in aesthetics. The little war-sketch, 'The Defensive Flank,' is in a different order from all the rest: it is terrific in its restraint: not a word of it is wrong.

Possibly cleverness is a bad angel to Vicente Blasco Ibañez, whose large and nobly-conceived work, 'The Shadow of the Cathedral,' is marred by an excess of history and argument, some of it so preposterously long-winded as to sound almost like conscious showing-off. Certainly the knowledge shown is extraordinary; but we do not read a novel to be impressed by the novelist's knowledge. We like it to be there, but hidden, implied, leavening and suggesting—not paraded between us and the characters.

In the precincts of the vast cathedral of Toledo lurks a whole population, shut off with its own traditions from the busy world. To it, after a career of hideous danger and suffering, the revolutionary comes back to die, only to find himself again drawn into the very enthusiasm and martyrdom from which he had sought escape, and again to find his teaching distorted by human greed and violence. The idea is almost good enough to survive its treatment.

The hero of Mr. Merwin's book is Jan Po, a Chinese secret-service agent sent into Balkh, a country adjacent to Parthia. The Balkhan question was—what is silk? Roxana, the fortunate mistress of Balkh, asked of it, as the decayed actor in *Punch* asked of money—"Is it a herb?" It was an economic question: if the Middle West could discover the secret of the Far East, it could manufacture its own silk, and Chinese trade would be destroyed. Love, torture, jealousy and fear are artfully intermingled in an exciting tale. We are not allowed to forget that Jan Po is a mandarin of the eighth rank with button of worked gold. And, amid all the jangling of the Asian empires, we hear the rumour of the arms of Rome. The time is just before the invasion of Parthia by Hadrian.

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Other New Novels

(Notice on this page does not preclude fuller review of a book in a later issue.)

AMONG the more important of new novels must be reckoned *Tony*, by Stephen Hudson (Constable, 6s. net), and *Bread*, by Charles Norris (Fisher Unwin, 7s. 6d. net). Mr. Hudson has a certain reputation and a following of his own: it is doubtful whether *Tony* will enhance the one or delight the other. It is, in form, the confession of a cynical scoundrel, who reveals his own baseness and "glories in his shame": sentiment is introduced to modify the darkness of the picture, but only in one connexion, and in a highly conventional form. There is inevitably a certain monotony about such a story; but its air of worldly wisdom and its vivid description of shady characters and sunny scenes will win it some popularity.

Mr. Norris is now well established among the younger American writers. He confines himself for the most part to everyday affairs, but he always illuminates them with imagination and sympathy. *Bread* is a very long, thorough, solid piece of work, and interesting throughout.

For those who prefer the odd to the usual, Russia is certainly a happier hunting-ground than America. *That Which Happened*, by Ivan Shmelov (Translated by C. J. Hogarth. Dent. 5s. net), carries oddity almost too far. As is said in the preface, "The central episode of the work turns upon the struggles of a soul which the quest of a world of 'heavenly light,' and 'truth and love' . . . has bereft of reason"; and there is a hysterical note throughout which in places makes the narrative practically incomprehensible. On the other hand, *The Cathedral Folk*, by Nicolai Lyeskov (Translated by Isabel F. Hapgood. The Bodley Head. 7s. 6d. net), is, if anything, too explicit. It is of enormous length, and gives in detail a picture of the lives of Russian priests about the middle of last century. It has a child-like simplicity of humour and at times a profound pathos; but there is too much of it. *The White Ship*, by Aino Kallas (Translated by Alex Matson. Cape. 7s. 6d. net), may rank along with the Russians, though it is translated from the Finnish and treats of life in Estonia. Mr. Galsworthy, who contributes a Foreword, declares Madame Kallas to be "one of the strongest and most individual of living writers." The praise is certainly just. These brief sketches and tales have the poignancy of folk-stories, and no one who reads them is likely to forget them.

Mr. W. E. Norris arrives in the lists again with *The Conscience of Gavin Blane* (Hutchinson, 7s. 6d. net), and Mr. G. B. Burgin with *The Spending of the Pile* (Hutchinson, 7s. 6d. net). There can be little new at this time of day to say about either of them. Each has a large circle of readers, and gives those readers exactly what they expect. Mr. Burgin is a very skilful craftsman, Mr. Norris is that and something more—having sometimes almost a Trollope touch. Mr. Eden Phillpotts has rather a bewildering variety of styles, but in *Cheat-the-Boys* returns in the direction of the one that first made his fame. The heroine's reputation is indicated by the title, but Mr. Phillpotts gives us no crude picture of a flirt. His reading of character, though sometimes rather pedantically expressed, is always patient, thorough and sympathetic.

Three further books represent another set of established reputations. *Anna Nugent*, by Isabel C. Clarke (Hutchinson, 7s. 6d. net), is what one expects from that author—a story in which the Roman Catholic Church, and the difficulties involved in love-affairs between members of that church and those who do not share its beliefs, play a prominent part. But Miss Clarke never writes a mere tract. Her characters are not lay-figures put forward to prove a thesis, but human beings with real weaknesses, entangled in real difficulties. The hero and heroine are, however, too easily

induced to believe what selfish schemes suggest to them. In life, if two people love each other, they are apt to tell each other so and "chance it": in books, they despair and depart on the flimsiest of evidence, without taking adequate steps to find out whether the evidence is true. But one must forgive Miss Clarke the weak spot of her plot for the readableness of the whole. *The Black Cow*, by the late Mrs. J. H. Skrine (Arnold, 7s. 6d. net), is one of those grim yet tender studies of rural life for which the author was so well known. *Friend, You are Late*, by Alice Herbert (The Bodley Head, 7s. 6d. net), is lighter in texture but not less profound in thought. It is a really remarkable and courageous book, which should give rise to a good deal of discussion. Its heroine is a girl who is driven by passion to leave the husband with whom she has been happy and to throw in her lot with a man who offers her no chance of happiness at all. So far, the theme is not original: what is original is the way in which this catastrophe is led up to, by insistence on the sensual leanings of the girl when as yet young and unmarried. Such insistence would, in the hands of many contemporary writers, be ugly and sordid: Mrs. Herbert is perfectly sane and sure in her treatment of it. Another point of originality is that the attraction exercised by the bad young man is not merely physical: it is also the attraction of childishness, of dependence. Mrs. Herbert has her lapses into the affected and the strained, but on the whole she writes freshly and charmingly.

From Mr. Mais we get, in *Perissa* (Grant Richards, 7s. 6d. net), the usual mixture. His hero begins well, by taking charge of an irresponsible girl—a caricature of all that our grandmothers might have feared that the most fatuous "flapper" would become—and almost simultaneously falling in love at first sight with a woman married to a middle-aged and apparently certifiable miser. There is a touch of journalism, a touch of beagling, a touch of hunting, more than a touch of school-mastering. Nowhere is there any attempt to discriminate the niceties of character or to make the incidents probable: everything is crude, violent and hasty. But undoubtedly Mr. Mais has the power of giving his readers what the people who continue to be his readers presumably want. There is a rush in his stories which carries you along if you surrender yourself to it.

We conclude with a bunch of "shockers" distinctly above the average. Mr. Gurdon, in *Feeding the Wind* (Chapman and Dodd, 7s. 6d. net), exploits a topic of which we confess ourselves somewhat tired—the world-destructive plans of a "master-anarchist." The world has been destroyed, or brought to the brink of destruction and just saved at the last moment, half-a-dozen times in the past year—in fiction. But it is impossible to grudge Mr. Gurdon his opportunity of writing things like: "England lies helpless at my feet. I hold the scalpel to her nerve-centres. When she is struck the world will upheave, spewing death from its depths, smearing its face with destruction. And it is I who will have awakened Chaos—I, Kékulen." In *The Girl from Hollywood* (Methuen, 7s. 6d. net), the creator of Tarzan gives up to bootleggers, cocaine-fiends and movie-actresses the talent more usually concerned with Martians and apes: but his gusto is as remarkable as ever, and we do not doubt that he will continue to delight his public. *The Big Heart*, by John G. Brandon (Methuen, 3s. 6d. net), is a well-written story of black-mail and violence, diversified by humour.

But for spontaneity of humour and novelty of subject, let us more especially commend *The Runagate*, by C. C. Lewis (Cape, 7s. 6d. net). Two young men aspire to a post in Burma: there is a sense (we shall not reveal what it is) in which both of them get it; and the genuinely exciting incidents are all the more exciting for being linked with sensitive characterization and high spirits. Altogether this is a very jolly book, and, if not of an ambitious kind, at any rate as good as a book of its kind could be.

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Round the Library

I HAVE been reading the two new volumes of Proust, the third section of his account of Sodom and Gomorrah, 'La Prisonnière,' and am beginning to wonder whether I shall have the patience to tackle the promised volumes which are to complete the work. There is so little to reward one for one's labour. The French has none of the qualities for which we esteem French writing, the story is drawn out to a thinness almost incredible, and the characters in whom we are expected to interest ourselves are ignoble to the last degree when they are not mere shadows. I have had, like most serious students of literature, to wade through some of its cesspools, not a few of them in French, but never have I found another work which betrays at once such an overpowering interest of its author in filth and such a complete inability to interest his reader in it. *Tous les genres sont bons, sauf le genre ennuyeux.*

* * *

When the temporary craze for Proust has passed away to the limbo in which lies the vogue of M. Romain Rolland, we shall be able to extract from this appalling mass of boredom passages which will—not justify—but render comprehensible these enthusiasms. The childhood of Jean Christophe, his solitary games, struck the reader when he first came upon the description with the same force as the story of the boy in 'Du Coté de chez Swann.' In 'Antoinette' there is the French bourgeoisie at her best, like the grandmother in Proust. Both Proust and M. Rolland are interested in music and can carry over that interest to their readers, even if Proust had a keener ear for the overtones of sentiment, and they will probably both live, if they are destined to live, by this side of their work.

* * *

There is a sensible relief in turning one's mind to the survey of our own recent literature which has been added by Mr. Edmund Gosse to his 'Short History of Modern English Literature,' first published a quarter of a century ago, and now brought up to date as far as possible in the exclusion of living authors. I am afraid that Mr. Gosse's attitude toward romance is a little too coldly classical. Ruskin's 'Unto this Last' may appear to him "strange essays in finance," but it is one of the efficient causes of the Labour Party of to-day, and has influenced ethical writing as others of his works have influenced literary criticism. Morris's style in the prose romances is one which no one could expect Mr. Gosse to admire,—still it has been praised by judges of equal authority, and only a wholehearted admirer of the stilted formality of the eighteenth century could call his later work "inconclusive and even chaotic." Still Mr. Gosse's general survey of the period, after allowing for the personal equation, is made with the hand of a master. One little fault must be found. I know the lamentable outcry the publisher makes when his cherished stereotypes are interfered with, but 'A Bibliographical Note' more than anything else needs revision, and to send, for example, readers of Spenser to Grosart, when there is the masterly and cheap Oxford edition of de Selincourt and Smith, is an unnecessary blunder which a few minutes' work would have avoided.

* * *

I suppose it is part of our poor human nature that when an author is described on the cover of his book as "one of the profoundest living critics," I begin to

Table: A Miscellany

wonder whether I shall recognize it in his work. 'Tolstoy and Modern Consciousness,' by Mr. Janko Lavrin (Collins, 6s. net), seems to me to be a quite good but ordinary study of Tolstoy from the point of view of the two well-recognized opposing tendencies in his nature, which owes nothing to "modern consciousness" in its elucidation—whatever modern consciousness may mean. The only trace of philosophy I can find in the book is an overwhelming use of vague polysyllables which either conceal thought or make nonsense. Mr. Lavrin must not talk of "the infinite and mysterious landscape" of Russia, or of "conjuring up the naked human soul from the depths of its psychological pandemonium," and very little philosophy is needed to know that the effect of the world war on the "evolution" of anything will take much longer than half-a-dozen years to show itself.

* * *

Let me command to notice 'A Chapter of Mediaeval History,' by Mr. Justice Madden (Murray, 10s. 6d. net). It treats in the true amateur way of the early literature of field sport and horses, and when I say "amateur" I imply that in most ways it is better than professional work, as it should be. Justice Madden discourses pleasantly of Albertus Magnus, who included in his great work *De Animalibus*, recently reprinted from his autograph manuscript, treatises on the ailments of the horse and on falconry, on the story of King Modus and his wife Queen Reason, on Gaston Phoebus and Froissart, on our poor English contributions to the early literature of sport, on chivalry, jousting, tournaments, and things in general. One feels that he is at his best with Froissart, though why he pities Froissart for the language he had to use I cannot tell. Perhaps Mr. Madden would have preferred the sixteenth-century Latin into which he was industriously translated. I am inclined too to think that very much more is left of the old France of Froissart in the south than Mr. Madden thinks: I know I found my Froissart places easily in the parts of Languedoc I have been in.

* * *

I am glad to find a number of voices in the Press echoing the public demand for something better than gramophone scraps. A few weeks ago H.M.V. gave us a Brahms Quartet, absolutely entire, now the Columbia have published a Brahms Sonata for Violin and Piano, with no cuts, played by Messrs. Catterall and Murdoch, and I am assured that all their serious work in future will be uncut. This Sonata is admirably recorded; Mr. Murdoch at the piano shows off all the best qualities of the music and the violinist; he is an ideal partner. I hope that we shall soon have a lengthy piece of his best from him—a solo or a concerto. When shall we have the 48 Preludes and Fugues played not as mathematical exercises but as the works of the romantic Bach was? Consider the First Prelude, played a little slower than usual, in Bach's *tempo* in fact. You are in a moon-lit garden in the warm summer night. A flow of running water ripples by, and a heavy drop plashes from a fountain on the first note of every bar, until one loses count of everything else in the pained expectancy of the splash, and suspense becomes so unbearable that the musician breaks away into a new rhythm. Of course you will omit the bar in this Prelude that Bach did not write. Who added it; was it Czerny?

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Stock Market Letter

The Stock Exchange, Thursday

IN the Stock Exchange Market Stakes this week, The Franc has come first, second and third. Everything else, to continue the racing phraseology, Also Ran. The debate in the French Chamber to-day, was awaited with an interest higher than the Stock Exchange has ever taken before in our Ally's politics. Even the sedate Consol Market became swept into the turmoil excited by the furious fluctuations of the franc, the rally in which—from 118 to 103 in less than 24 hours—caused crisp rises in Conversion, Funding Loan and Victory bonds. British politics as a market factor have been cast into the shade, and the various strike-threats which rumble in the industrial areas have fallen upon unheeding ears. Investment, nevertheless, goes on steadily absorbing good stock. The speculative sections, their prices swinging at the tail of the French exchange, are largely what we call professional.

BRAZIL AND THE MISSION

The City is looking forward with marked attention to the return from Brazil of the mission which proceeded to Rio in order to study, at first hand, the difficulties with which the Brazilian Government was faced in connexion with its financial position. A good many people thought at the time that the adventure was a kind of desperate and last resort, in that Brazil, faced with a serious financial crisis, might possibly have been refused by Rothschilds before she extended the hand of invitation to the mission which has now accomplished its labours. This was openly suggested in the City, but the Jeremiahs were doubtless wrong. At any rate, the mission can claim to have done a good deal for the benefit of British bondholders, for the prices of nearly all the Brazilian stocks and shares are better now than they were at the time the pilgrims left these shores. The value of the milreis has recovered; Brazilian railway stocks are substantially better in price, Brazilian Government bonds stand points higher than they did, and there is a much less nervous feeling current in regard to the Brazilian outlook generally.

AN AMBASSADOR

One of the missionaries is Mr. Hartley Withers, the well-known author, whose latest book has been published during his absence from this country. His inclusion in the party was undoubtedly due to the fact that, combined with a trained and experienced mind in financial affairs, he possesses in an unusual degree the quality of being able to get at the root of a difficulty; and, moreover, to propound remedies in a fashion which always commends itself, through its facility of comprehension, to the man in the street.

THE YIELD ON ORDINARY SHARES

Most of the stores companies are doing very well, and their recently-published accounts for 1923 show that last year made a great improvement upon the preceding twelve months. Prices in the Stock Exchange market have been advanced in consequence of the reports. Barkers, which pay a dividend of 20 per cent., yield 6½ per cent. on the money at the present price, and Whiteleys, the dividend on which has been raised from 20 to 25 per cent., return 7½ per cent. on the money. Lyons, also paying 25 per cent., offer £5 2s. 6d. per cent. and Harrods, whose 11 per cent. showed an advance of 3 per cent. over the previous year's dividend, yield 5½ per cent. D. H. Evans paid 18 per cent. and the shares at 50s. give 7½ per cent. on the money.

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Continued from page 280.

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EXAMPLES AND ESTIMATES

Confining ourselves for this week to such mines as those which are likely to have a lease of life of fifteen years and upwards, we start with the Van Ryn Deep, which is expected to last for about that period, namely 15½ years. Modder Deep is calculated to have a life of 16 years; the Modder of 17; Modder "B" 20; Brakpan and City Deep, 22; Government Leases, 25; Springs, Crown Mines and Geduld of 35 years each. Purchases of these shares can be made at current levels upon a basis which will yield from 7½ per cent. on the money to fully double that sum, allowing for redemption at 5 per cent. compound interest. The highest yield is that obtainable from Modder B. which works out at 18½ per cent., but recent developments—and here is the speculative point—on the property have proved disappointing; a good many people have been selling their shares because they do not like the nature of the returns. Hence the price of the shares and the yield which is now offered: hence, also, the attraction attaching to Modder "B" as a speculation that promises excitement.

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PUBLISHERS' PRIZE

For the Acrostic Competition there is a weekly prize:—A Book (selected by the competitor) reviewed in that issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW in which the problem was set.

RULES

1. The price of the book chosen must not exceed a guinea; it must be named by the solver when he sends his solution, and be published by a firm on the list printed on February 16.

2. *The coupon for the week must be enclosed.*

3. Envelopes must be marked "Competition," and addressed to the Acrostic Editor, SATURDAY REVIEW, 9 King Street, London, W.C.2.

Competitors not complying with these Rules will be disqualified.

Awards of Prizes.—When solutions are of equal merit, the result will be decided by lot.

Under penalty of disqualification, competitors must intimate their choice of book when sending solutions, which must reach us not later than the Friday following publication.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 106.

IN PILLAR ONE A SCOTTISH PATRIOT VIEW;
"SCOTORUM MALLEUS" IN PILLAR TWO.

1. Scents from afar the place where heroes bleed.
2. The tale of Troy divine we there may read.
3. Behead a crack, chink, fissure, blemish, fault.
4. Sundry she speeded to the deep, damp vault.
5. In schoolboy parlance he'd be called a sneak.
6. Revered by every wearer of the leek.
7. In others' wheels he loves to put a spoke.
8. How very small! Suppress it at one stroke!
9. Act well your part, and this perhaps you'll gain.
10. Behead a lofty bank beside the main.
11. Quick, quick, I do beseech you, let me go!
12. Measures the force with which the breezes blow.
13. From rock to rock behold it fearless leap.
14. By need or enterprise urged o'er the deep.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 104.

HAIL, LAND OF FREEDOM, GIRT WITH HILLS OF SNOW!
HAIL, THOU WHOSE BOLT LAID THE OPPRESSOR LOW!

1. Shrieked, as the pilgrim left his native land.
2. Of all the cervine race I tallest stand.
3. Hostile it is and ever will remain.
4. Though hard, 'tis sweetened when its end is gain.
5. "Not one, but all mankind's epitome."
6. A famous pasture of the honey-bee.
7. The best all gone, there's nought but this remains.
8. A useful remedy for burns and sprains.
9. Bursts into blossom soon as spring returns.
10. Wise in his own conceit, reproof he spurns.
11. Here might the fairies dance 'mongst flowers and ferns.

Solution of Acrostic No. 104.

S ea-me	W ¹	1 The Night-winds sigh, the breakers roar,
W apit	I ²	And shrieks the wild sea-mew.
I nimica	L	Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Canto I.
T oi	L	2 The North American stag or elk, the
Z imr	I ³	most gigantic of the deer genus.
E nn	A ⁴	3 See the character of the Duke of Buck-
R esiduu	M	ingham in Dryden's "Absalom and Achito-
L inimen	T	phel."
A lmond-tre	E	4 The plain in Sicily where
N umskul	L	Proserpine gathering flowers, herself a
D el	L	fairer flower, By gloomy Dis was gathered.

ACROSTIC No. 104.—The winner is Mrs. McCalman, 18 Grosvenor Square, W.1, who has selected as her prize 'Letters Written during the Indian Mutiny,' by Fred. Roberts, published by Macmillan and reviewed in our columns on March 1 under the title 'Lord Roberts's Letters.' Fifty-six other competitors chose this book, seventeen named 'The Counterplot,' fifteen 'George III and the American Revolution,' nine 'Art and Man,' etc.

ONE LIGHT WRONG.—Plumbago, Ayesha, A. M. W. Maxwell, Crucible, Vigilant, Dolmar, Gunton, Sisyphus, L. M. Maxwell, N. O. Sellam, John Lennie, Martha, R. J. M. W., Mrs. W. H. Myers, and Lethendy.

TWO LIGHTS WRONG.—Arthur Mills, Oakapple, St. Ives, F. I. Morcom, M. Story, D. L., Joker, The Pelhams, Lilian, Iago, H. K. Carrie, E. P. Kingdon, Baitho, Materfamilias, Met, Gay, Mrs. J. Butler, F. M. Petty, Stucco, B. Alder, C. J. Warden, Old Mancunian, Diamond, Carlton, East Sheen, Hetrians, Beehive, Brum, Mrs. E. A. Smith, C. E. P., Major W. G. Phillimore, Hanworth, Lenno, Dilston, Roid, Quis, H. M. W., Miss Rosa C. Burley, Vixen, H. M. Vaughan, and Rev. J. A. Easten. All others more.

(Answers to correspondents are unavoidably held over.)

No. 5.

The Story of Coal

SAFETY FIRST

Mining is a dangerous occupation—for those miners who are employed underground. The only absolutely safe mine is the mine in which no man works and from which no coal is produced.

But Mr. Humphrey Morgans, President-elect of the Institution of Mining and Metallurgy, says that "more is being done for the safety of workers in British mines than ever before" and the British Coal Mines are shown by official figures to be the safest in the world. In the United States, for 1922 the fatal accident rate was over 2½ per thousand persons employed. In Great Britain, for 1923 it was just over 1 per thousand persons employed, or just over 4½ per million tons of coal raised.

For 1913, in Great Britain it was over 1½ per thousand employed and nearly 6 per million tons raised. Between 40 and 50 years ago the average was 2½ per thousand employed and 7½ per million tons. The downward curve has been steady and continuous.

The whole of the miner's life underground and every detail of mine management is the subject of elaborate regulation, embodied in Acts of Parliament, and enforced by severe penalties upon the manager for infringement.

There are in every mine examiners or deputies, whose whole time is devoted to making inspections of the mine as to the presence of gas, ventilation, state of roof and sides. They are required to examine every part of the mine not less than two hours before the commencement of each shift, and before the men are allowed to enter the working places. The miners themselves may appoint two of their number to inspect the mine at least once a month.

Daily personal supervision by the manager is required by Act of Parliament. Continual inspection is also carried on by the Mining Engineer—the machinery must be inspected at least once in every twenty-four hours—and over him and the manager are the Inspectors appointed by the Mines Department.

Mining, however, is a healthy occupation. Dr. Haldane, the great Public Health authority, in evidence before the Sankey Commission, said:—

"Although coal mining is associated with a number of special dangers, it entails in this country less loss of life than average occupations. The death rate from accidents is about double the average in other occupations; but owing to the exceptionally healthy conditions the death rate from disease is much below the average. The total death rate is thus below the average. About sixty years ago the general death rate among coal miners was about a third higher than in average occupations, but has since then diminished much more rapidly than in most other occupations. The accident death rate among coal miners has diminished to about a fourth of what it was sixty years ago."

That is the record of Private Enterprise. And the reduction in the fatal accident rate will continue.

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THE EIGHTY-SEVENTH HALF-YEARLY GENERAL MEETING OF SHAREHOLDERS was held at the Head Office, Yokohama, on the 10th September, 1923, when the Directors submitted the following Statement of the Liabilities and Assets of the Bank and the Profit and Loss Account for the Half-Year ended 30th June, 1923, which was duly approved.

BALANCE SHEET		
LIABILITIES.		Y.
Capital	...	100,000,000.00
Reserve Fund	...	69,000,000.00
Reserve for Doubtful Debts	...	2,038,532.00
Notes in Circulation	...	8,438,093.05
Deposits (Current, Fixed, etc.)	...	479,365,651.11
Bills Payable, Bills Re-discounted, Acceptances, and other Sums due by the Bank	...	424,964,975.97
Dividends Unclaimed	...	35,999.85
Balance of Profit and Loss brought forward from last Account	...	5,015,825.30
Net Profit for the past Half-year	...	10,092,411.36
		Yen 1,093,251,488.64

ASSETS.		
	Y.	Y.
Cash Account—		
In Hand	26,901,060.39	
At Bankers	51,335,028.66	78,326,089.05
Investments in Public Securities and Debentures	...	154,926,498.11
Bills discounted, Loans, Advances, etc.	...	278,637,693.50
Bills receivable and other Sums due to the Bank	...	560,632,126.35
Bullion and Foreign Money	...	8,892,408.87
Bank's Premises, Properties, Furniture, etc.	...	12,452,672.76
		Yen 1,093,251,488.64

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT		
DR.	Y.	
To Reserve Fund	...	4,000,000.00
To Dividend—		
yen 6.00 per Share for 1,000,000 Shares	...	6,000,000.00
To Balance carried forward to next Account	...	5,108,236.66
		Yen 15,108,236.66
CR.		
By Balance brought forward 31st December, 1923	...	5,015,825.30
By Net Profit for the Half-year ended 30th June, 1923	...	10,092,411.36
(After making provision for Bad and Doubtful Debts, Rebate on Bills, etc.)		
		Yen 15,108,236.66



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